

vided that Mr. Sharett's permission were secured. Mr. Comay telegraphed Mr. Sharett and obtained his permission. He added that, although this would exceed his instructions, he would have no objection to leaving the documents with you on a "see and return" basis.

5. Although he did not say so, we gained the impression that this initiative on Mr. Comay's part resulted from the favourable impression which was made upon him and upon Mr. Eban by your speech in the House on January 24.³

6. We undertook to pass this information on to you and said that we would ask you to give consideration to Mr. Comay's request for an interview. My own view is that it would be of advantage for you to receive Mr. Comay and to examine the documents which he described.

7. Mr. Comay then went on to say that various Opposition Members of Parliament had asked him for information on the Middle East. He gathered that it was for background purposes, for use in Party caucuses and in briefing Members to take part in debates. Mr. Comay mentioned specifically that he had received recent visits, seeking information, from Mr. Coldwell, Mr. Diefenbaker and Mr. Low. He said that he had prepared notes which he gave to these M.P.s, cautioning them that they were not for attribution and that they were for use as background only. He then handed us a copy of these background notes† (attached) explaining: "I want you to know what I'm doing." As you will observe, the paper is not identifiable as originating from the Israeli Embassy, and while it attempts to enlist sympathy for the Israeli cause, it is written without heat and appears to be a fairly rational presentation of the case — granted that it is from an Israeli standpoint.

8. Mr. Comay asked whether we had any objection to his distributing material of this kind. This was a difficult question to answer. Obviously it is propaganda for Israel in any discussion in the House; at the same time its measured terms and its anonymity appear to be within the bounds of propriety. We did not wish to give Mr. Comay the impression that there was any official Departmental sanction for actions of this kind; on the other hand we did not wish to give him the impression that we necessarily disapproved. We therefore confined ourselves to saying that the material appeared to be measured in its terms, anonymous as to source and that it presumably was open to the Egyptian Ambassador, if he so wished and was so approached, to take similar action. Mr. Comay agreed that it was.

9. Mr. Comay then said that he had "a hunch" that a movement was developing in the ranks of the Opposition in favour of an embargo on the export of arms to the Middle East, and perhaps of all arms; and that this movement reflected what he described as a "grass roots" upsurge of feeling among the people of Canada. He confessed that he was apprehensive of the results of such a movement to Israel and that this was why he had been prepared to give background notes to M.P.s. We said that we had gained the impression that, since your speech in the House of January 24, the movement in favour of an arms embargo had subsided. Mr. Comay said "I think it has, but I think it will be raised again." He made it clear that he was not referring to the interim embargo imposed by the Prime Minister pending a study of Canadian policy on the sale of arms, but to the possibility of a general embargo.⁴

J. L[ÉGER]

³ Voir Canada, Chambre des Communes, *Débats*, 1956, volume I, pp. 485-492.

See Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1956, Volume I, pp. 462-469.

⁴ Saint-Laurent a annoncé l'embargo provisoire le 20 janvier 1956. Voir Canada, Chambre des Communes, *Débats*, 1956, volume I, p. 360. Voir aussi document 12.

St. Laurent announced the interim embargo on January 20, 1956. See Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 1956, Volume I, p. 344. See also Document 12.