

BLUMEL, ANDRE

APR 28 1944

TO: Mr. Berle ✓  
FROM: J. W. Pehle

I have your memorandum of April 22, 1944, referring to my memorandum of April 18 and the attached proposed cable to Minister Harrison concerning Andre Blumel.

The War Refugee Board has, of course, no particular interest in Blumel. On the other hand, it is vitally interested in determining whether the hospitalization technique is feasible. And although the Board has been on record almost since the date of its creation as not being in a position to concern itself with individual cases, we have not shrunk from dealing with individual cases where it was necessary to do so in order to test the feasibility of a relief or escape device.

Accordingly, I would appreciate it very much if you would reconsider the proposed message concerning Blumel, bearing in mind that so far as we are concerned any other individual may be substituted as the subject of the experiment. Of course, if such substitution is made, it may be necessary to delete any reference to the American Friends Service Committee.

(Initialed) J. W. P.

*Original handed  
to Berle  
5-2-44*

L. S. L.

LSLesser:als 4/28/44



DEPARTMENT OF STATE ✓  
WASHINGTON

April 22, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. PEHLE:

Your memorandum of April 18. This is a request from the American Friends Service Committee asking special intervention for Andre Blumel, secretary to former Prime Minister Blum. They want him released from internment and sent to Switzerland; want us to ask the Swiss to do it.

We can not. Blumel is not a refugee any more than any other French citizen, and there are many thousands of them in internment. The Swiss still recognize Vichy, and this man is a political prisoner of the Vichy Government. The United States has no peculiar relations with him apart from many thousands of others entitling us to ask special treatment for them; if we are to use up whatever limited influence we have (if any) we should be obliged to use it first for political prisoners whose release would be of benefit to the United Nations.

I don't blame the Friends Service Committee for wanting to take care of their friends, but if we start using the War Refugee Board for that, it will lose its real significance. Further, if the American Government starts using the Swiss for that, they will lose any ability to take care of either our prisoners or the real refugees.

*ad*  
Adolf A. Berle, Jr.,  
Assistant Secretary

Cable from War Refugee Board to Harrison at Bern for McClelland

The American Friends Service Committee reports having information to the effect that Andre Blumel, formerly secretary to former Premier Blum of France is interned by the Germans and is so seriously ill as to be in danger of death unless he is promptly removed to a place where more adequate medical care is available to him. While we are unaware of any previous instance where a civilian internee has been released by the interning power for hospitalization in a neutral country, you are requested to approach appropriate officials of the Swiss government and inquire whether they would be willing to approach Germany in an effort to procure Blumel's release for hospitalization in Switzerland.

It is suggested that a technique similar to that developed by the Swiss in 1916 for prisoners of war, and later embodied in the Geneva Conference of 1929 and the Model Agreement annexed thereto, might be employed, with such suitable guarantees and assurances to the Germans as the circumstances may warrant.

Funds for Blumel's transportation, medical and hospital expenses are available.

Please keep the War Refugee Board advised of any developments in this matter.

THIS IS WEB BERN CABLE NO. 1

In order to avoid confusion in connection with its cables to representatives in the field, the Board, commencing with this cable, intends to number its cables to each representative consecutively. In replying to Board cables kindly refer to the WEB designation. You should also consecutively number all cables to the Board.

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April 18, 1944  
11:25 a.m.

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Pehle, Stewart, Central Files, Cable Control Files

*Cleaned up with  
Schaffner on 4-19-44  
Telephone R.S.L.*

RLSmith  
LSLesser:als 4/13/44

*R.S.L. R.L.S.*