

ESTABLISHMENT OF TEMPORARY and PERMANENT HAVENS - GENERAL

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April 21, 1944

To: Mr. Pehle ✓
From: Mr. Hirschmann

On the subject of potential areas for havens for refugee populations, may I suggest further explorations into the possibilities of securing approval to establish havens in (a) Syria, (b) Cyprus, and (c) Turkey.

All three present enormous obstacles but efforts should be made in their direction. In Syria you will face the problem of the Arabs, the French who have been there for generations and the British who now have a nominal control since the recent difficulties in the Lebanon. I am not convinced that these could not be overcome. An approach to the French might be made through Washington. I do not encounter too much difficulty with the British as it might suggest an alternative for releasing pressure from Palestine. They will all tell you that the Arabs will energetically and militantly oppose such a plan.

The British have permitted a small number of refugees to enter Cyprus. As a temporary haven it may again satisfy the British on the grounds mentioned above. I understand there is plenty of room for 5,000 to 10,000 refugees.

Your Board suggested havens in Turkey in several of your telegrams to me and I covered the situation regarding this, as I found it, in my full report to the Board of March 13th. At this writing I still believe the Turks would unequivocally oppose such a plan but the situation should be watched closely for a deterioration in the independent position of the Turks with regard to their ability to categorically refuse such recommendations for cooperation with the high policy of the Government of the United States.

In the above three suggested areas, it must be remembered that we would be obliged to promise and find means to transport, feed and clothe the refugees, construct and supervise the camps, and to promise to remove the refugees to another country, preferably their own, after the war.

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