CROSS REFERENCE ON TURKEY

FOR:
- Amendment to this License
- Extension of this License
- Renewal of this License
- Correspondence concerning this application
- Other (Specify)

For relative material -

SEE: EVACUATION OF REFUGEES TO TURKEY
OCT 21 1944

Dear Mr. Katzki:

I think you will be interested in the enclosed photostatic copies of several newspaper articles which appeared following Mr. Hirschmann's press conference upon his recent return to the United States.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Herbert Katzki,
United States Embassy,
Ankara, Turkey.

Enclosures.
OCT 21 1944

By dear Mr. Ambassador:

I think you will be interested in the enclosed photostatic copies of several newspaper articles which appeared following Mr. Hirschmann's press conference upon his recent return to the United States.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable
Laurence A. Steinhardt,
The American Ambassador,
Ankara, Turkey.

Enclosures.

RBB Hutchison:hd 10-20-44
Dear Mr. Hirschmann:

I am sending you herewith the third supplement for "War Refuge Board - Projects and Documents". Included with the material is a set of instructions indicating the order in which the new material is to be inserted and which of the old material is to be deleted.

Sincerely,

(Signed) John

Mr. Ira Hirschmann,
Special Representative of
the War Refuge Board,
United States Embassy,
Ankara, Turkey.

Enclosures.
Dear Mr. Katski:

I am sending you herewith the third supplement for "War Refugee Board - Projects and Documents".

Included with the material is a set of instructions indicating the order in which the new material is to be inserted and which of the old material is to be deleted.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pohle

J. W. Pohle
Executive Director

Mr. Herbert Katski,
O/o United States Embassy,
Ankara, Turkey.

Enclosures.
Jul. 4 1944

Dear Mr. Katski:

I am sending you herewith the second supplement for "War Refugee Board - Projects and Documents".

Included with the material is a set of instructions indicating the order in which the new material is to be inserted and which of the old material is to be deleted.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director.

Mr. Herbert Katski,
O/o United States Embassy,
Ankara, Turkey.

Enclosures.
Turkey's Opportunity to Save the Lives of Thousands. *

To the Editor of The Sun:

Hundreds of thousands of persecuted Jews can be saved by action of the Turkish government. Across the border from Turkey these people are being murdered, thousands of men, women and children are hiding in cellars and caves, in woods and swamps, waiting for only one thing—the chance to cross that border and escape the murderers who are hunting them down.

But this Turkish border is closed to the helpless and desperate people, whose only chance for life lies in getting across the frontier. Galvanized by the urgent plea of these people will not be the permanent residents have been given permission to enter the gates of Turkey. This cannot—it must not—continue.

We appeal to the government of Turkey to change this policy immediately. We call on the Turkish people to join all other humanitarian nations by demanding that their government heed the dictates of humanity and decency. Turkey can do these things. Opening her frontiers to refugees from murder, she can provide for their safety by establishing temporary emergency refugee shelters for as many people as possible; by giving passport permits to all who wish to pass through that country to other havens of refuge.

Johanan J. Smertens
V.P., Chairman, Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe.

New York, June 24.
Dear Herbert:

Mr. Learritt asked that the following information be forwarded to you pursuant to your request to Mr. Boel Aronovici to furnish you the names indicated to him by Mr. Neuberger of Jewish leaders still in Yugoslavia.

The following two persons are reported to be in Zagreb:

Dr. Robert Gluckstahl;
Kissicky, who until a few months ago was still handling Jewish community matters through an office at Trenkova 9.

Dr. Mokio Pionte is reported to be in Belgrade.

Mr. Aronovici states that Dr. Lea Slager and Otto Steiner, the latter being a cousin of Mr. Neuberger, are both reliable persons who are with Marshal Tito's army and can be very useful.

I hope that your trip to Turkey was a pleasant one.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

J. W. Pehle,
Executive Director.

Mr. Herbert Katzki,
Representative of
War Refugee Board,
o/o American Embassy,
Ankara, Turkey.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date, SEP 12 1972
Mr. Herbert Katzki telephone me Friday night at home and insisted again that I give you the names of persons, indicated to me by Mr. Neuberger of the Yugoslavian Group here as Jewish leaders still in Yugoslavia.

Zagreb: DR. ROBERT GLUCKSTEIN; KISSICK, who until a few months ago was still handling Jewish community matters through an office at Trenkova 9.

Belgrade: DR. BUKIC PIADE

Two reliable persons, who are with Marshal Tito's Army and who can be very useful are: DR. LAW SINGER and OTO STEINER, the latter being a cousin of Mr. Neuberger.

Mr. Katzki would like to have these names forwarded to him through the War Refugee Board.

N/A
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 17, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle,

This will acknowledge your memorandum of the 9th, enclosing the proposed cable to Ambassador Steinheitz. This has been sent with the addition of one sentence in which I tell him personally to use his own discretion in the matter of staying there. I added this sentence because I have just had a personal letter from the Ambassador telling me how important it is to him to return to this country by July 1 for several important reasons, and I did not want him to feel that I was not taking this into account.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Mr. J. W. Pehle
War Refugee Board
Executive Office of the President
Washington, D. C.
May 27, 1944

My dear Mr. Steinhardt:

Thank you for your kind letter of May 10, 1944.

I am looking forward with pleasure to meeting you in Washington to congratulate you in person for the magnificent job which you have done and also to discuss with you the many difficult problems confronting the War Refugee Board in Turkey.

While it would have been extremely helpful to have joint discussions in Washington with both you and Mr. Hirschmann, I am sure that you understand clearly my reasons for feeling that Mr. Hirschmann should return to Turkey at once.

It is clear that Mr. Hirschmann's effectiveness will be limited by your absence from the scene, but I am sure that you will make all necessary arrangements for the Embassy staff to assist Mr. Hirschmann in every way possible. In the event that it becomes necessary during your absence to discuss refugee matters with representatives of the Turkish Government, I assume that you will have indicated to the Embassy officer charged with this responsibility the desirability of having Mr. Hirschmann accompany him and participate in the discussions.

I am confident that during your stay in Washington we shall gain from you an even greater understanding of the problems which you have faced in refugee matters and perhaps shall be able to arrive at possible solutions of problems which still confront us in this field.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Ambassador Lawrence G. Steinhardt,
American Embassy,
Ankara, Turkey.

J. W. Pehle - 5/24/44
My dear Mr. Fehle:

I am most grateful to you for your kind and thoughtful letter of April 22 and particularly for the time and trouble you took in outlining to me the very considerable achievements of the Board under your direction in the short space of time since its creation.

At the same time may I express to you my appreciation for the generous sentiments to which you have given expression concerning the assistance that it has been my good fortune to have been able to render the Board.

I should be disposed to outline to you what we have been able to accomplish here, as well as the obstacles with which we are confronted, were it not for the fact that you have received a full and detailed report on the subject from Irri Hirschmann whose ability and energy contributed materially to what we have been able to achieve thus far.

Entirely aside from having been able to induce the Turkish Government to increase the number of transit visas being issued to refugees from the Balkans, to simplify their archaic procedure and to charter the S.S. Tărgul, I feel that our principal accomplishment has been that of obtaining the continued permission from the Turkish Government for Jewish refugees to transit Turkey, who have arrived here on so-called illegal boats without Turkish visas or Palestine entry certificates. Should the Turkish Government continue to grant transit to so-called illegal refugees, it should be possible to deal with the situation without too great difficulty. On the other hand, the Turkish authorities may find it necessary to take steps to protect their limited transportation facilities. Up to the present time I have no reason to anticipate an influx which will cause us difficulties with the Turkish authorities, and to this extent at least, I am not disposed to worry about crossing this bridge until we get there.
My principal concern at the moment is the apparent stubborn unwillingness of the German Government to grant a safe conduct for the SS TRI. Only those of us who have had to deal with the innumerable vexatious problems which have arisen in connection with the chartering of this vessel can fully appreciate our disappointment that, after having overcome every obstacle, the vessel should now be lying in the port of Istanbul ready to sail - subject only to the granting of a German safe conduct. The German Ambassador is returning to Ankara tomorrow and doubtless has the answer with him. If, by the grace of God, it should be in the affirmative, I feel that we will have accomplished something real in the voyage of the SS TRI which will immediately result. If, on the other hand, he brings a negative answer, I shall always feel that we were fully justified in the efforts and money expended in the hope, forlorn though it may have been, that the German Government would evidence a shred of decency.

I would not be frank were I to conceal from you my regret and surprise that the American and British Governments between them have not been able to see their way clear to assigning a single four or five thousand ton vessel for the evacuation of refugees from the Balkans. While I recognize the paramount consideration of military necessity, it is difficult for me to understand why the United States and the British Empire, which together are said to have a monthly production of merchant vessels of over 1,750,000 tons, which lose innumerable vessels as a result of submarine and aerial activity from day to day and which have been able to provide a large number of neutral boats to carry wheat to Greece, have been unable between them to assign a single small vessel for the rescue of refugees from the Balkans. My path has been made particularly difficult with the Turkish Government by reason of the unwillingness or inability of the American and British Governments to assign a single vessel to the rescue of refugees. The officials of the Turkish Government simply cannot understand why they should be called upon to provide one of their six available passenger vessels for this work at the same time that the American and British Governments claim that they cannot assign a single vessel.

In this connection it is important to bear in mind that the entire Turkish merchant marine consists of only two or three hundred thousand tons, that most of the vessels are in bad condition as a result of the inability to obtain spare parts and to make effective repairs since the outbreak of the war, that Turkey is almost completely cut off from both belligerent camps and that, being a maritime country with a long coastline and its only two important cities being ports, the nation is dependent on its limited merchant marine, particularly in view of its one single-track railroad system.
In this connection, the Turkish authorities have repeatedly told me that they would assign one or even two of their best vessels permanently to the rescue of refugees from the Balkans provided the American and British Governments would furnish them with a substitute vessel or vessels. The failure of the American or British Governments to respond to this gesture has made it extremely difficult for me to convince the Turkish authorities of the sincerity of our attempts to rescue refugees from the Balkans.

Be that as it may, we have been and will continue to exert our efforts to the utmost with the object of carrying out the purposes for which the Board was constituted.

Insofar as concerns the return of Ira Hirschmann to Turkey, I do not know of any one who would be more welcome in our midst. The assistance he rendered me and his services in general on behalf of the Board were invaluable. On the other hand, the problems here are complex. Anyone who has not had to deal with them in person cannot possibly understand or appreciate them.

For this reason, it seems to me that Mr. Hirschmann's services to the Board are of more value, at least for the time being in Washington than they would be here, and as I expect to be in Washington during the second half of June for consultation, it would be my suggestion that Mr. Hirschmann not return to Turkey until after I have arrived in Washington. On my arrival there we can discuss the question and you can make your decision as to whether to send him back to Turkey or hold him in Washington on the basis of a consideration of the picture as a whole.

In the meantime, however, it is highly desirable that the War Refugees Board send to Turkey as soon as possible a young man or a young woman of limited administrative ability to relieve me of the innumerable details in connection with refugee work with which I am confronted every day. My staff consists of only four or five officers and a dozen available clerks. I am called upon to service eleven agencies of our Government, and the resultant burden which has required me to work late into the night seven days a week has brought me to the point at which I feel that an energetic young man or woman sent here by the Board could relieve me of innumerable vexatious details and thereby free at least some of my time to pay more attention to matters of policy and approaches to the Turkish Government in respect of serious matters.

While on this subject, I may add, generally speaking, that I have been forcibly struck with the large personnel in Washington of all of the agencies of our Government whose principal function is to send requests or instructions for action to a handful of individuals in the field who are not only few in number but carry the burden of trying to accomplish the purposes and desires of 100 times their number in Washington. It seems to me therefore that a
fairer distribution of personnel would be in the interests of all concerned. That is to say, there should be more people in the field for accomplishment and perhaps less people in Washington telling the few in the field what they would like to have done. In other words, we are suffering from a large number of people in Washington who are telling an insufficient number of people in the field what to do, in many cases without appreciating the difficulties of accomplishment. I have made this suggestion in the belief that in the light of your practical experience you will appreciate the desirability of having more people in the field and less in Washington in order that you may achieve the maximum results.

For my part, it is probably unnecessary for me to pledge you my continued cooperation and support to the utmost of my ability.

With every good wish and kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]
MAY 4 1944

Dear Mr. Baerwald:

Ambassador Steinhardt has asked us to inform you that he deeply appreciates your thoughtful message and that you may rely upon him to continue to exert himself to the utmost on behalf of the unfortunate victims of Nazi persecution.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Paul Baerwald,
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee,
270 Madison Avenue,
New York, New York.
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (BR)

Secretary of State
Washington

776, April 29, 8 p.m.

FOR THE WRB FROM THE AMBASSADOR
Ankara's 48.

Please inform Paul Behrwald of the American Joint Distribution Committee that I deeply appreciate his thoughtful message and that he may reply upon me to continue to exert myself to the utmost on behalf of the unfortunate victims of Nazi persecution.

STEINHARDT

RE P
NFL
ANKARA.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

WAB no. 28.

Following Ambassador Baerwald from Paul Baerwald of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee:

QUOTE Deeply grateful your sympathetic understanding and cooperation in relief and rescue many unfortunate. Behalf Joint Distribution Committee wish extend to you our appreciation for your kind assistance UNQUOTE.

HULL

(OLW)

WAB: GLW: KG

4/22/44

S/CR NE SWP
April 21, 1944
11:00 a.m.

To: Mr. Warren

From: J. W. Pahle

It will be appreciated if you will have the attached cable despatched at once to Ambassador Steinhardt, Ankara, from Mr. Paul Sarwald, American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and bill the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 270 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y., for the cost of the message and any answer thereto.

Attachment.

Philab 4/20/44
CABLE TO ANKARA

Please deliver the following message to Ambassador Steinhardt from Paul Baerwald of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee:

"Deeply grateful your sympathetic understanding and cooperation in relief and rescue many unfortunate. On behalf Joint Distribution Committee wish extend to you our appreciation for your kind assistance."

THIS IS WBB ANKARA CABLE NO. 23.

Philab 4/21/44
WESTERN UNION

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to.

APRIL 16, 1944.

AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT,
US EMBASSY,
ANKARA (TURKEY)

DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION YOU EXTENDED

REUSSI REWIEK STOP ON BEHALF JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE WISH EXTEND TO YOU

OUR APPRECIATION FOR YOUR KIND ASSISTANCE

PAUL BASSWOLD
JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
My dear Ambassador Steinhardt:

I wish to thank you for your letter of April 4. I fully appreciate the good work done in Turkey by Mr. Hirschmann, but I am also more than ever aware that the fine results accomplished are due in very large part to your sympathetic and whole-hearted cooperation with him. I have taken the liberty of indicating to the members of the War Refugee Board the important assistance we have received from you. The Board is also aware of the fact that the work done in Turkey constitutes the greatest success achieved in carrying out the war refugee program. Please accept the thanks of myself and the Board for all that you have done.

Needless to say, I am as disturbed as you are at the possibility of Mr. Hirschmann’s severing his connection with the War Refugee Board, for his leaving would be a great loss precisely at a time when our work is commencing to show results. Please be assured that I shall do all in my power to make it possible for him to remain with us.

I think that a brief summary of the work which the War Refugee Board has been doing outside the field of operations with which you are personally familiar may be of interest to you, and may be helpful in further indicating that the Board really means business.

Much of the Board’s effort is being devoted to the establishment of temporary havens for refugees who succeed in escaping from the Nazis. One of the programs which the War Refugee Board is seriously considering at this time is a plan to establish temporary havens in the United States for refugees. The purpose of these camps would be to provide a place in the United States where refugees having no other place to go could wait in safety until it becomes possible either to return to their homes or to settle elsewhere. While in such temporary camps the refugees would of course not be permitted to travel to other parts of the United States.
If this proposed plan is approved, we might at the same time make a direct appeal to the German Government requesting it to release all Jews and other persecuted minorities in Nazi territory. In this way the American Government could most effectively demonstrate to the world its desire to take affirmative action toward the solution of this problem.

Ever since the Bermuda conference the American and the British Governments have been considering the possibility of establishing a refugee haven in the Italian colonies of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. With the approval of the State Department, we are now requesting Ambassador Winant to make a specific proposal to the British Government pursuant to which the American and the British Governments would share responsibility for financing the establishment and maintenance of camps in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, including the cost of transporting refugees to the Italian colonies.

Meanwhile approximately 500 to 600 refugees in Spain are being transferred to Camp Lyautéy, which has just been established in French Morocco. The French Committee of National Liberation has agreed to accept a maximum of 2000 refugees at Camp Lyautéy, which is soon to be transferred to the administration of UNRRA.

In order to encourage the Spanish, Portuguese and Swiss Governments to receive refugee children who may succeed in escaping from France, our consular officials in Switzerland, Spain and Portugal have been authorized to issue during the present quota year a maximum of 5000 immigration visas to children under 16 who shall have arrived in these countries after January 1, 1944, but before July 1, 1944. These visas are to be granted without regard to religion, nationality or stateless status and also without regard to the question of availability of means of transportation to the United States. Arrangements have also been made for the renewal of these visas in the event that this should prove necessary.

We are also taking steps designed to delay the Nazi program of annihilation. Thus at the present time there is being cleared with the State Department a cable asking the International Red Cross to approach the German and satellite Governments with the request that Jews, and other persons confined because of race, religion or political belief, receive treatment equal to that accorded civilian internees to whom the Geneva Conference relating to prisoners of war is applied by analogy.

Recently we received information to the effect that the German authorities are inquiring through neutral sources into the validity of Latin-American passports held by Jews in certain camps in occupied
Europe. As you know, Jews in this category have thus far been receiving better treatment than their less fortunate brethren who lack such passports. Acting on the assumption that hitherto the German motive in granting such Jews preferential treatment includes some hope that such persons might be considered exchange material for Germans in the Western Hemisphere and also some fear that German ill-treatment of such persons might afford the Latin-American countries a pretext for further limiting the freedom and economic activities of German residents in Latin-American countries, we are requesting the Swiss Government to advise the German Government that the United States is now undertaking discussions with the Latin-American countries for a further exchange of Germans in the Western Hemisphere for persons in German controlled territory. The German Government is being advised further that this Government considers persons holding Latin-American passports as eligible for exchange. In the meantime we are conducting negotiations concerning this matter with the Latin-American countries. Even if no exchange materializes the reopening of exchange negotiations may help stay the executioner's hand.

Since the creation of the War Refugee Board, the Treasury Department upon the Board's recommendation has been licensing remittances to neutral countries to finance relief and rescue operations in enemy or enemy-occupied territory as well as relief for refugees who have already reached neutral territory. Since January of this year relief and evacuation operations of this type costing a total of $2,125,000 have been licensed. Of the above amount approximately $1,137,700 is being sent to Switzerland, principally for rescue and relief operations in enemy and enemy-occupied territory. About $753,000 of the total remittances authorized is being expended for rescue and relief operations in France.

The above description of some of the more significant aspects of the work we are now doing is not intended to be complete. However it should give a picture of how your work has fitted into the general War Refugee Board program. It is suggested that you consider the above information as confidential.

Please accept once again my appreciation and thanks for all that you have done.

Sincerely yours,

[Signed] J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,
Laurence A. Steinhardt,
The American Ambassador,
Ankara, Turkey.

April 20, 1944
Ankara, April 4, 1944.

Mr. John Pehle,
War Refugee Board,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Pehle:

I am seizing the opportunity presented by Mr. Hirschmann's return to Washington to tell you of the fine job that he has done while in Turkey. His quick grasp of the situation, energy and good judgment have been of invaluable assistance to me and have contributed largely to making effective the work of the War Refugee Board in Turkey.

I am disturbed at intimations from Mr. Hirschmann that his association with Bloomingdale Brothers as Vice President may necessitate his severing his connection with the War Refugee Board. The invaluable experience which he has gained here combined with the excellent judgment he has displayed on behalf of the Board impel me to urge you to take whatever steps may be necessary by enlisting the aid of Mr. Hull or Mr. Stettinius if necessary, to induce the officials of Bloomingdale's to make whatever arrangement may be necessary to permit him to give at least a part if not all of his time to the work of the War Refugee Board either in Turkey or Washington.

With kind personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]
Secretary of State
Washington
PRESS 556, twenty-eighth

Remarking that establishment of German military and political control in Hungary and adoption of similar measures in Balkans have aroused great anxiety in both England and America, since all elements (including hundreds of thousands of Jews) who would facilitate Germany's internal collapse and capture of European fortress from within had taken refuge in Hungary and other Central European and Balkan countries. Tozac writes in TASSIRİF PEKAR of twenty-sixth that it is for foregoing reason that President Roosevelt in his recent address invited nations of world to open their gates to Jews and other refugees and give them all possible assistance.

STEINHARD

THE
U. S. REPRESENTATIVE COMPLETES PLAN FOR EVACUATION OF JEWS FROM BALKAN COUNTRIES

ANKARA, Turkey, March 12. (JTA) — The first steps toward mass evacuation of Jewish refugees from Rumania and Bulgaria have been completed, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was told today by Ira A. Hirschmann, representative here of the United States War Refugee Board.

Mr. Hirschmann revealed that Turkey has agreed to passage of 5,000 children to Palestine. He added that negotiations for a Turkish ship, capable of carrying 1,000 children at a trip, are shaping up for early settlement. The ship will pick up its passengers at Constanza, Rumanian Black Sea port, and take them to Haifa.

The British authorities, Hirschmann said, will provide Palestine visas and he is hopeful of getting a German safe conduct. At the present time, only about 100 persons weekly are allowed exit from the Axis-controlled Balkan states. They are allowed 24 hours to pass through Turkish territory.

Jewish Children From Bulgaria Reach Palestine

HAIFA, March 12. (JTA) — Fifty Jewish children from Bulgaria arrived here today. They were met by representatives of the Jewish Agency and taken to Jewish settlements where they will reside and be educated. The last group of Rumanian Jews who were held in Cyprus for more than two years also landed in Haifa today.
PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 10, 1944
NUMBER: 409

HIRSHY MANN SENDS THE FOLLOWING FOR THE ATTENTION OF
PEOPLE, WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

As respects the individual mentioned in the Department's cable of March 6, 1944, No. 168, I urge you to take no action in the matter unless there is a compelling reason for employing and sending him to Turkey at this time. With respect to the statement made by the applicant that he is familiar with refugee and shipping problems in this area since a portion of his business consisted of carrying refugees from Rumania and elsewhere to Palestine, I would be interested in learning his name so that I may ascertain and report to the Board the nature and scope of his former activities.

It is recommended by me that pending my return to Washington no action be taken on this application since I count on returning early in April with a detailed report and recommendations concerning the situation here, including the number and type of individuals needed to carry on the Program of the Board in Turkey.
An applicant has indicated interest in being employed by the War Refugee Board. He is thirty-seven years old, Jewish, born in Jerusalem, and has been a naturalized American citizen for a number of years. Besides English, he says he speaks Turkish, Arabic, French, German, Hebrew, Yiddish, and some Greek. Professes to be familiar with Turkey, Palestine and similar areas and to have carried on a shipping business in the areas of Rumania and Palestine for about 5 years ending with the outbreak of war in 1939. He has indicated familiarity with shipping and refugee problems in these areas since part of his business consisted in carrying refugees to Palestine from Rumania and elsewhere. He has been employed by the United States Government for about 5 years.

Subject to your approval we propose to employ him with the thought that he might be sent to Turkey to work there or elsewhere under your direction. From our talks with him he seems to be type of person who could be of value to you on operating level. Please advise as soon as possible.

STETTENHUS
(Acting)
3/1/44
FSA NCA A-3/3 PA
To: Mr. George L. Warren

From: J. W. Pehle

I should appreciate it if the attached cable to Ambassador Steinhardt for our representative, Mr. Hirschmann, were transmitted at once.

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

FEB 29 1944
TO STEINHARDT FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

An applicant has indicated interest in being employed by the War Refugee Board. He is 37 years old, Jewish, born in Jerusalem, and has been a naturalized American citizen for a number of years. Besides English, he says he speaks Turkish, Arabic, French, German, Hebrew, Yiddish, and some Greek. Professes to be familiar with Turkey, Palestine and similar areas and to have carried on a shipping business in the area of Rumania and Palestine for about 5 years ending with the outbreak of war in 1939. He has indicated familiarity with shipping and refugee problems in these areas since part of his business consisted in carrying refugees to Palestine from Rumania and elsewhere. He has been employed by the United States Government for about 2 years.

Subject to your approval we propose to employ him with the thought that he might be sent to Turkey to work there or elsewhere under your direction. From our talks with him he seems to be type of person who could be of value to you on operating level. Please advise as soon as possible.

JH Murphysdh 2/25/44

[Signature]
Miss Chansey
Mr. Paul
Mr. Gaston
Mr. H. D. White
Mr. Pehle
Mr. Luxford
Mr. Dutieos
Mr. E. H. Bernstein
Mr. Stewart
Mr. Leoser
Mr. Friedman
Miss Hodel
Mr. Pollak
Mr. Zander
Mrs. Grahame
Miss Daughlin
Mrs. Cohn
TELEGRAM SENT
PLAIN
March 2, 1944

AMBASSADOR,

ANKARA,
168/2 Second
To H.E. GHIBRAH FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

General suggests that you contact Joseph Karmen,
115a Palace Hotel, Istanbul, as soon as possible.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)
(GLW)
March 1, 1944

TO: Mr. Warren
FROM: Mr. DuBois

It would be appreciated if you would have the attached cable from the War Refugee Board to Hirschmann dispatched as soon as possible.

(signed) J. E. DuBois

cc - Miss Chaumoo (for the Secretary); Mr. Paul, Mr. White, Mr. Gaston, Mr. Pohle, Mr. Luxford, Mr. E. M. Bernstein, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Lesser, Miss Hodel, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Pollack and Miss Laughlin.

Attachment.

JEDuBois:cor
3/1/44
TO HIRSCHMANN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Borgese suggests that you contact Joseph
Ellman, Pera Palace Hotel, Istanbul, as soon
as possible.

JEDU Boisier
3/1/44
FEB 24 1944

TO: Mr. George Warren,
Department of State

FROM: Mr. Pehle

I would appreciate your sending the attached cable
to Hirschmann in Ankara.

(Signed) J.V. Pehle
TO: STEINHARDT, ANKARA
FOR HIRSCHMAN, FROM PEHLE.

For your information and guidance
the following is the text of a letter sent to the Secretary of State on September 9, 1943 by the British Embassy in Washington. A copy of this letter has recently been transmitted to me by the Embassy.

"I write to let you know that His Majesty's Government recently decided that in future all Jews, whether adults or children, who may succeed in escaping to Turkey from enemy-controlled territory since the closing of the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier in May last, will be eligible (after a preliminary security check in Turkey) for onward transport to Palestine, where they will be placed in camps, go through a further security check and if found satisfactory will be gradually released as legal immigrants into Palestine against the current half-yearly immigration quotas. By 'onward transport' is meant such transport by sea or rail as may be arranged by His Majesty's Government in cooperation with the appropriate diplomatic mission.

This policy will also apply to Jews who manage to escape to other neutral countries, but where they have escaped to countries in which they are safe they will normally remain there. Thus the Jews at present in Mauritius, Cyprus and Spain would remain there (unless, as is hoped, arrangements can be made in the case of Spain to remove them for the duration of hostilities to Allied territory in North Africa) and only in very special cases and for very special reasons would authority be given for any onward transport to Palestine.

The numbers to be admitted under these new proposals will not entail any increase in the total number of immigrants permissible for the period ending the 31st March, 1944.

"I have been asked to emphasize the confidential nature of this letter, as secrecy is essential in the interests of the refugees themselves and His Majesty's Government intend to make no public announcement of the policy described above. They are, however, informing the Jewish Agency for Palestine in confidence of what is proposed.

"I am writing a similar letter to Mr. Myron Taylor."
In view of the policy indicated in the letter it is assumed that the Turkish government now has sufficient assurance that refugees entering Turkey will have an ultimate destination open to them and therefore will be willing to lend full cooperation to measures designed to increase the flow of refugees through Turkey. If, however, such is not the case you should advise the Board at once.
TO: STEINHARDT, ANKARA

FOR HIRSCHMANN, FROM PERLS.

For your information and guidance the following is the text of a letter sent to the Secretary of State on September 9, 1943 by the British Embassy in Washington. A copy of this letter has recently been transmitted to me by the Embassy.

"I write to let you know that His Majesty's Government recently decided that in future all Jews, whether adults or children, who may succeed in escaping to Turkey from enemy-controlled territory since the closing of the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier in May last, will be eligible (after a preliminary security check in Turkey) for onward transport to Palestine, where they will be placed in camps, go through a further security check and if found satisfactory will be gradually released as legal immigrants into Palestine against the current half-yearly immigration quotas. By 'onward transport' is meant such transport by sea or rail as may be arranged by His Majesty's Government in cooperation with the appropriate diplomatic mission.

"This policy will also apply to Jews who manage to escape to other neutral countries, but where they have escaped to countries in which they are safe they will normally remain there. Thus the Jews at present in Mauritius, Cyprus and Spain would remain there (unless, as is hoped, arrangements can be made in the case of Spain to remove them for the duration of hostilities to Allied territory in North Africa) and only in very special cases and for very special reasons would authority be given for any onward transport to Palestine.

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subject: evacuation of Jews from Axis Europe.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Mr:

Referring to the Department's telegram #6 dated January 29, and #6, dated February 11, 1944, requesting a report concerning the actual situation as it exists today in Turkey in respect to what is being done to rescue the Jews and other persecuted minorities from Nazi Germany, including particularly (a) the extent to which there are war refugees who are not allowed to enter Turkey; (b) the extent to which war refugees are allowed to enter Turkey and cooperate in their entry, and (c) the extent to which such refugees are not allowed to enter Turkey because of Turkish failure to cooperate in war entry, and reviewing my report dated March 8, 1944, to what the United States Government can, to effectuate with all possible speed the rescue and relief of the victims of enemy opposition, including particularly the, can be done to make the Turkish Government cooperate more fully in rescuing our people. I have the honor to submit the following information and recommendations:

Over a period of the last few years the United States has, at every effort to facilitate the transit of Jews from the Axis countries through Turkey a route to Palestine. Its efforts have been hampered by (1) the unwillingness of the Axis powers to permit Jews to depart therefrom, and (2) the difficulties of transportation. Further details with regard to these points are given below:

Reference to the specific points referred to above, under (2), (3) and (c), I may say that the Turkish Government has repeatedly given evidence of its willingness to permit a larger number of transit visas to Jewish refugees to pass through Turkey than the number of visas that have been able to reach the Helenic frontier due to the fact that refugees have been unable to depart from Axis territory. Although willing to grant more visas than have been given, the Turkish Government has said that it is unable to activate the charter of a Turkish vessel to be used to bring refugees from Syrian or Egyptian ports to Turkey, fearing such vessel would be sunk in the Black Sea.

My recommendations as to what the United States Government can effectively do in this situation are (1) immediately pressure the Turkish Government that should the latter ever it a Turkish vessel to carry refugees from Damascus or Egyptian ports to Istanbul, the vessel should be immediately replaced; and/or (2) arrange immediately to make such vessel available.
vessel available for the purpose in question; and (3) bring to the notice of the U.S. governments and peoples, by use of the radio, the issuance of public statements and other means, that they will be held accountable in the final settlement for their mistreatment of the Jews and other minorities. In this connection reference is made to my telegram No. 288 dated February 18, 1946, containing a similar recommendation from Dr. Ira Hurwitz to the Director of the U.N. Refugee Board.

I submit for the Department's further information in connection with the foregoing the following data in respect to the problem of rescuing Jews and other persecuted minorities from the Axis countries:

The movement of Jews into Palestine from Axis countries has been divided in general into two categories: (1) legal immigration into Palestine from the Axis countries; and (2) illegal immigration into Palestine from such countries.

**Legal Immigration into Palestine**

The British Government at the beginning agreed to admit into Palestine from Axis countries two classes of persons:

(a) Persons who were granted immigration certificates before the rupture of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria but were unable to depart therefrom for Palestine.

(b) Relatives of persons actually resident in Palestine.

Subsequently, in 1939, a third category was added, namely, 4,500 children plus 500 adults coming from Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary, whose adhesion into Palestine was agreed upon. The plan involved the issuance of 5,000 immigration certificates which would be distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary (incl. Slovakia)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proposal also included the issuance by the Swiss Consulates in the three capitals of visas to persons approved by the representative in each capital of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

Later, in 1945, the British Government announced that 12,500 Jewish refugees from Europe would be admitted into Palestine. This figure was to include the 4,500 children and 500 adults referred to above.

The British Government now time ago agreed to admit into Palestine during the period 1940-44 not in excess of approximately 76,000 Jews; very recently it announced that the period of time during which this number would be admitted would be extended.

In so far as survey is concerned, the problem has been one of transit across Turkey on route to Palestine.
discussions between the American and British embassies with the
Turkish authorities concerning the transit of refugees across Turkey to
Palestine, the Turkish Government declined to permit the
proposed refugees to be carried on Turkish vessels (by
reason of lack of coal and space, and other technical reasons).
It agreed, however, to permit a limited movement by rail across
Turkey. The question of the refugees being carried on other
Turkish steam vessels was also raised but no definite decision
has been reached due to the total lack of such vessels.

In April 1943 the Turkish authorities agreed to attach
every ten days to a train from Izmir (Izmir) to Aleppo
one coach, on which a group of 75 refugees could be carried.
It was stipulated that each such group must have departed from
Turkey before the second group could be admitted. Subsequently,
as the result of a conference between the American ambassador
and the Turkish minister for foreign affairs, this stipulation
was withdrawn. However, under this arrangement no single
or a group of 75 persons has to date reached Aleppo, because it has
been impossible to arrange for the refugees to be released from
this train.

As discussed above, through the Swiss authorities,
arrangements have been made for the evacuation from Bulgaria
and Romania of a considerable number of Jews who were about to be expelled
to Germany, since the collapse of Italy there has been a diminution
in the movement to Poland.

Since late 1942, a system has been in force whereby lists
of names of evacuees in the approved categories mentioned
under (a) and (b) above are submitted to the Turkish Government
with the request that transit visas be granted to those persons
in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. The Turks have made a restrictively
limit of nine "persons" per country per week in order
not to overload the Turkish trains, but this restriction has been
liberally interpreted to constitute each "person" a family of not more than five individuals, or a total of five persons.
Furthermore, in order to reach the Turkish Government have allowed out
a modest number of travelers under this scheme, but very few have
come out of Bulgaria, the Bulgarian government having, in April 1943
prohibited the exit from or transit through the country
of Jews, thus bringing to an almost complete stop the evacuation of Jews from Europe, in view of the fact that the only
route open to Jews by land to Turkey from Europe is through
that country.

At the present time two groups of 75 children each in
Romania are being prevented from starting their journey because
of the refusal of the Bulgarian authorities to allow them to
transit Bulgaria. Consequently, efforts are now being made
have these two groups sent to Istanbul by boat from Romania.
The International Red Cross is working on this matter. Palestine
has agreed to accept them. The Turkish authorities have
assured the Agency that they will furnish the necessary cars
if these children succeed in reaching Istanbul, the S.S. L. GEO,
not of Constantinople, is being considered as a vessel on which
these children might be brought to Istanbul.

There is also under consideration a proposal for the departure
of 300 children from Hungary under the Turkish transit
scheme of 75 people every 10 days but their departure is also
being prevented by Bulgarian transit difficulties.

The Turkish
The Turkish Ministry of Communications has recently agreed with the Allies to furnish two cars per week over a limited period of the to transport a limited number of refugees through Turkey.

In general, the French authorities have prevented the departure of large groups although small groups leave either with their consent or by means of bribery.

Illegal Immigration into Palestine

The illegal immigration began about 1940 when the Palestine immigration quota was very small. Polish and Hungarian refugees obtained the use of unseasonably vessels and cold space on them at considerable prices. The boats would start out for Palestine, passing through the Straits, which they could do without interference by the Turkish authorities. If the vessels succeeded in reaching Palestine, the passengers, not being admissible under the quota, were destined to be deported to the Island of Mauritius. One of the vessels, the ... (I. I.), was sunk in the harbor of Haifa. Its cause was never determined. A number of the ships which started for Bulgaria and Transylvania for Palestine were wrecked on the Turkish European coast of the Black Sea. Others were wrecked in the vicinity of Corvin.

At this time the British Legations in Hungary and Bulgaria asked the respective governments to put a stop to the immigration to the government in question refused or failed to do so. The British authorities threatened to return to the country of origin in such of the refugees as had landed in Turkey. The British Government threatened the Turkish authorities to delay such action. Eventually many of the refugees were sent to Cyprus where some are still living; however, the absorptive capacity of Cyprus was soon exhausted and it soon became impossible to send more there.

This illegal immigration ceased some time ago. It is possible it may be resumed, particularly should the procedure for legal immigration break down. Confidential information indicates the possible use for such illegal immigration of the following vessels: the ... (I. I.), now understood to be at Varna, which can carry about 220 persons; and the ... (I. I.), now understood to be at Constanta, which can carry about 250 passengers. These vessels are of about 250 and 25, tons, respectively, and could, of course, be very overcrowded. Here the number of passengers indicated taken aboard. Furthermore, their seaworthiness is in doubt.

In this connection, I may add parenthetically that as a result of the ... (I. I.) disaster (February 21, 1942), I have approached with caution any proposals for the use of questionable vessels for the transport of refugees from Hungarian or Bulgarian ports and have insisted as a condition on that any vessel in Turkish waters which might be available must receive the prior clearance of the American or British naval authorities in Istanbul as to its seaworthiness.

Number of vessels actually used

Late in 1942 two groups of children transit Turkey on route to Palestine, 50 from Hungary and 50 from Romania.

According to information furnished by Mr. Barus, the representative in Turkey of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the total number of Jews to transit Turkey in 1943 on route from
his purpose to Palestine was 1,185. Details as to points of origin are set forth below:

**January-September 1943**

- Children up to 16 years of age and accompanying adults from Hungary: 195
- Children up to 16 years of age and accompanying adults from Romania: 74

**Refugees from Bulgaria:** 190

**Total:** 649

**October-December 1943**

- Individually from Budapest: 125
  - Bucharest: 50
  - Sofia: 52
  - others: 32

**Total:** 264

**Refugees sent to Cyprus from:**
- Greece: 136
- Bulgaria: 92

**Total:** 1,328

According to information supplied by Mr. Karas.

The situation appears to be that the German control over the exit of Jews from the various countries in southeastern Europe is more stringent, exercised in respect of the countries more remote from Germany than those nearer to Germany. Thus at the present time there are practically no Jews permitted to leave Greece, although a few escape illegally. Occasionally, despite the general prohibition, a few are permitted to depart from or transit Bulgaria (25 Jews arrived in Istanbul on or about February 13 from France); the Hungarian authorities appear to be willing to allow Jews to depart from Romania in some numbers; and the Hungarian Government's attitude appears from here to be more liberal than that of the Romanian Government (although transit to Turkey from both Romania and Hungary is hampered by the Bulgarian attitude and the lack of transport).
According to information furnished me by Mr. Wolkin, the number of Jews in the Balkan countries at the beginning of the war is estimated as follows:

Bulgaria - 75,000 (of whom about 40,000 still remain in Bulgaria);

Romania - 800,000 (of whom about 266,000 are still living in "old Romania");

Yugoslavia - 75,000;

Greece - about 72,000 (of whom the vast majority were deported to Poland).

With further reference to the Jews in Romania, it is understood that of the 100,000 who were expelled to Transnistria (mostly from Bessarabia and Bukovina) only 73,000 remain alive. The present distribution of the balance of the 266,000 mentioned above is estimated as follows:

Bucharest 100,000
Bucovina 25,000
Jassy 25,000
Jessey 25,000

Various efforts made by the ambassador assisted in the matter.

On April 25, 1942, I received the department's telegram No. 104, April 23, 4 a.m., requesting, at the solicitation of an interested organization in the United States, that I endeavor to obtain permission from the Turkish authorities for certain Jewish refugees who had arrived in Istanbul from Romania on the SS LIEGH on March 18 to land in Turkey in order to obtain visas to enter Palestine. I undertook, as reported to the department in my telegram 326, April 27, 12 noon, that the vessel mentioned had already sailed from Istanbul for Haifa with her refugee passengers on board and all her papers in order. I subsequently telegraphed that it had been impracticable to comply with the department's request, contained in the telegram above referred to, that the ambassador inform it of the name of the refugees in question, as the names were unknown at Istanbul (ambassador's 327, April 27).

In February 1943 the department telegraphed me regarding a story which had appeared in the New York Times of February 15 to the effect that the Rumanian Government had, according to neutral sources, advised officials of the United Nations that it was prepared to cooperate in transferring 70,000 Romanian Jews from Transnistria to any Mediterranean ports selected by the Allies. (Department's 146, February 17.) I replied to the department on February 27 (my 337) that a representative of the Jewish Agency for Refugees, Mr. Joseph Golson, had informed me that the New York Times account above mentioned was based upon the following:

Mr. Golson was visited on December 6, 1941, by a Dutchman who resided in Bucharest and who was temporarily visiting in Istanbul. This Dutchman, whose name was Schmidt and who was the Balkan and Turkish Director-in-Chief for Philip's Radio, had stated that he brought a proposal from a person named Lescu who was said to be the Rumanian Government official in charge of Jewish matters in Rumania. This proposal was to the effect that the Rumanian Government was prepared to consent to the departure of and provide ships for the...
for the transportation to elating or other allied ports of the
73,000 Russian Jews who remained from those previously trans-
ported to Trans Conduct, provided that the American and British
Governments were to a safe conduct for the vessels and to issue
the necessary visas. According toSemait, the representative of
the Jewish community in Bucharest who was appointed by the Gestapo,
was familiar with the proposal and favored it. Semait also
stated that the Catholic Bishop of Bucharest had expressed his
willingness to permit the use of the Vatican flag on the ships and
would endeavor to obtain permission to use the International Red
Cross emblems. Golden forwarded the proposal on December 6 to the
Jewish Agency for Palestine in Jerusalem.

I reported subsequently (my 392, March 2, 1 a.m.) that I
questioned the bona fides of the proposal described if for no
other reason than that the Hungarian Government obviously did not
possess the shipping facilities with which to transport 73,000
individuals.

On April 5, 1940, I called upon the minster for foreign
affairs and informed him that the American and British diplomatic
representatives in Bucharest had been requested by their govern-
ments, in view of the reported persecution of the Jews in Bulgaria
on the intention of the Bulgarian Government to deport them to
Gund to address an urgent appeal to the Turkish Government to
permit approximately 60,000 Jews to enter Turkey provided the
Bulgarian authorities would permit them to leave Bulgaria. These
Jews, the minister was informed, represented that part of the
Jewish population of Bulgaria which was concentrated in towns and
it was suggested that they be accommodated in temporary camps in
a suitable area in Turkey, acquired and set aside for this purpose.

The minister was informed that the American and British Govern-
ments were ready to assure the Turkish Government that all costs
connected with the evacuation of these refugees and their subsis-
ence in Turkey would be defrayed by the two governments, which,
to feed them. It was stated further that the two governments also
would undertake to repatriate the refugees upon the conclusion
of the war.

On July 17, 1940, I telegraphed to the Department by tele-
gram (my 1242, July 17, 1 a.m.) that a representative of the
embassy had contacted Dr. Jacob Grillo who stated that he was an
official representative of the World Jewish Organization in
Palestine and also the representative of that organization to
the Associated American Committee. Dr. Grillo informed the
embassy representative that the main purpose of his mission
was to rescue Jews from Europe; he added that he was interested
in two projects:

1) To locate 700 Jews, families of persons already
in Palestine for whom the organization which he repre-
sented had received a blanket visa for Palestine. He
stated he intended to work through the British Government
and the International Red Cross with a view to locating
these families and endeavoring to bring them to Palestine
at

2) To assist about 60,000 Jewish families con-
centrated in Transylvania. He thought that the best
way to help those people was to send them money. He
said that his organization in New York would like to
send funds to Bucharest either for the purchase of
food and clothing to be sent to Transylvania or for
the obtaining of money to be sent there.
In October 1943 the Embassy received information from the American Embassy in London of a rumor indicating that a mass evacuation of refugees children through Turkey existed. Upon investigation of this rumor it was ascertained that there was no foundation for it. The government of Turkey made it clear that there was no plan to evacuate children through the Turkish territory. Dr. Golden suggested that this rumor might be the result of certain advertising methods which were not being experienced in negotiations with the Bulgarian authorities for permission for Jewish children to leave Bulgaria.

Turkish Jews in France

Another category of Jews in whom the Department and the Embassy have been interested is the large number of Turkish Jews in France.

It appears that Mr. Barlas, local representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, received about the middle of December, 1943, a telegram from Mr. Neiman, Jewish Agency representative in Lisbon, stating that 10,000 Jews of Turkish origin in France, having lost their nationality owing to the provisions of Turkish law, were in danger of deportation to Poland. Mr. Barlas was asked to appeal to the Turkish authorities not to withdraw recognition from these Jews. Mr. Barlas stated, upon going onto the matter, that the Jews in France fall into two categories:

(A) Jews whose Turkish nationality is uncontested; these Jews have been given full Turkish protection and have either been repatriated to Turkey or have escaped persecution.

(B) Jews descended from Jews who emigrated from Turkey several generations ago and whose Turkish nationality has been annulled as a result of the provisions of a Turkish law adopted in 1928 providing that Turkish nationals residing abroad who fail to register with the Turkish consulates for a period exceeding five years may be deprived of their citizenship by the Turkish Government (see NATIONALITY Laws by Flannery and Hudson, Oxford University Press, New York 1939, page 571).

This second category of Jews (B) to whom it is understood Turkish representatives in France have so far accorded a certain measure of protection, is now threatened with deportation to Poland.

In view of the fact that these Jews no longer have Turkish nationality and in view of the Department's recognition (Department's telegram No. 67 dated January 23, 1944) of the fact that as a consequence the Turkish Government is in no position to extend protection to them, it is not to be expected that the Turkish Government would officially make representations to the Vichy Government on their behalf. It is understood, however, that an official appeal is being made to the Vichy authorities by the Turkish ambassador to Vichy France, Sekki Berkner, who has shown himself sympathetic disposed in the past in regard to Jewish matters. Possibly as the result of Mr. Berkner's representations a party of 50 Jews arrived in Istanbul on or about February 16th from France, having travelled by rail by way of Nice, Vienna, Nish and Belgrade.

On January 10, 1944, the Department was informed (my telegram No. 49, January 10, 3 p.m.) of an informal conversation which...
which I just had with the Turkish minister of foreign affairs regarding several thousand Jews of Turkish origin reported to be in jeopardy in France. The minister informed me that he could take whatever steps he found possible to afford protection to these Jews and that, in so far as uncertain those who were able to establish Turkish citizenship, he would demand the same treatment for them as in the case of other Turkish citizens. With respect to those who were unable to establish Turkish citizenship, he said that he was doubtful that the Vichy authorities would recognize his right to intervene on their behalf.

In accordance with the department's instructions of January 25, 1944 (Department's telegrams 67, January 25, 11 A.M.) that I express to the appropriate Turkish officials the department's hope that for humanitarian reasons they could be able to afford protection to as many as possible of these Jews of Turkish origin in France and would be liberal in defining their citizenship status, I discussed this matter with the minister of foreign affairs (as reported in my telegrams No. 151, January 6, 11 A.M.,) and urged him to extend to them the maximum protection of the Turkish government. I assured him that a humanitarian ground the Turkish government could exert itself to the utmost to afford protection in these cases.

I may be mentioned in this connection that the American consul general at Istanbul received an inquiry from the department in December 1943 (Department's 51, December 25, 12 P.M.) regarding reports that paraguayan Jews confined in the concentration camp at Mire, France, were threatened with deportation to Poland because of a report that the paraguayan government had revoked their citizenship. In reply, the consul general telegraphed (its telegrams No. 4, January 4, 1944) that the consul general representative of Syria in Israel and of the Jewish Agency had been notified that the paraguayan government had agreed not to revoke the citizenship of paraguayan interned in this concentration camp.

Unavailability of vessels to carry refugees from paraguayan or bulgarian ports

As has been indicated above, one of the principal obstacles to the movement of Jews from the axis countries to Turkey has been the problem of transport.

The paraguayan authorities since April 1943 have practically prohibited the departure of Jews across the paraguayan-bulgarian frontier, presumably as the result of German action. As a consequence efforts have been made to arrange for the transportation of Jews to the paraguayan port of Constanza, to Turkey by boat. Efforts which have been made in this direction have to date been without result. The paraguayan flag vessel, the J.S. T. "CARRANO" and the J.S. CARRANO, which have been lying idle in the harbor of Constanza for nearly three years, have been considered as a possible solution but to date their use has been precluded either by the attitude of the paraguayan government—or more recently by the unavailability of funds to effect the proposed purchase.

As a result of a request made of the paraguayan ministry of foreign affairs by the British ambassador and myself, the paraguayan government took up with the romanian government the matter of obtaining these two vessels on charter for the purpose indicated. In the course of this matter was resolved that the paraguayan government

[The rest of the text is not clearly visible or legible.]
was not willing to permit the vessels to be chartered for this purpose and the Embassy was given to understand that the refusal was the result of action by German authorities in Rumania.

I have recently been informed by Mr. G. E. Simon, International Red Cross delegate in Turkey, that Colonel Teodorasan, Rumanian Military, Naval and Air Attaché in Ankara, came to see him early in February 1944 to propose that the International Red Cross purchase for the sum of 1,700,000 pounds sterling the two Rumanian vessels in Istanbul, the SS NASSAU and SS HEBERGABELI, that he had submitted the matter to the International Red Cross Headquarters in Geneva by telegraph and that he has subsequently received a reply stating that funds for their purchase are not available.

The question of obtaining ships from the Anglo-American shipping pool, possibly by transfer to the UNRRA for donation to the International Red Cross which could man the ships with neutral crews, has been raised and Mr. Murray Barfield of the Office of Strategic Services, called from Istanbul the suggestion, as a personal one, to Mr. Martin Goldammer, New York, at the end of January 1944. It is suggested that such ships, the property of the International Red Cross under Swiss registry, could perform many errands of mercy in addition to the specific one of assisting in the proposal to evacuate 5,000 Jews, principally children, from Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria.

It may be pointed out in this connection that the question of the nationality of the crews of vessels proceeding to a Rumanian or Bulgarian port to evacuate Jews is likely to present difficulties unless the crews of such vessels are citizens of neutral countries. The British authorities, for example, might object to a Rumanian crew bringing a vessel into Palestinian waters and it is to be expected that the Rumanian and Bulgarian authorities would similarly object to a crew of Allied nationality entering their waters.

On January 20, 1944 (my telegram No. 153) I advised the Department of receipt of information from the representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in Turkey, Mr. Ch. Barlas, that a Portuguese flag vessel under charter to the Joint Distribution Committee was then on route from Lisbon to Palestine with approximately 700 Jewish refugees and I suggested that the Department might wish, in view of the fact that the principal difficulty in rescuing more than a limited number of Jews from Transnistria is being occasioned by the lack of transportation, to suggest to the Joint Distribution Committee that efforts might be made to continue the charter of the vessel with a view to its proceeding from Palestine to Constanta in order to evacuate from Transnistria the Jewish refugees there.

Recently there has also been under consideration a proposal to obtain the use of a Turkish vessel for the purpose indicated. The vessel under consideration has been the SS VATAN. The possibility of obtaining the use of this vessel was discussed with me on February 8, 1944, by Dr. Isaac Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Palestine, Mr. Mordchai Eliash, who accompanied him from Palestine, and Mr. Barlas, the representative in Turkey of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. I suggested to them that they attempt to see both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Communications with a view to obtaining the use of the boat, stating . . .
stating that I thought the most feasible means of obtaining the use of the boat for a limited period would be to start with a request that it be made available for only one trip to Constanza. The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs was unwilling to see the Chief Rabbi, stating that as a matter of principle he could not receive him or any other ecclesiastical dignitary. The Foreign Minister suggested, however, that a call be made on Mr. Furidan Cemal Erkin, Assistant Secretary General of the Ministry, upon whom Mr. Eliaash and Mr. Barlas called on February 11. When they first broached the matter of obtaining the use of a Turkish vessel for this purpose, Mr. Erkin’s attitude was negative, the gentlemen named informed me, on the ground of the transport difficulties with which the Turkish Government is faced, and he suggested that they seek to obtain the use of a suitable vessel used by the Red Cross. Mr. Erkin’s attitude was, however, somewhat more favorable when the proposal was made to him that the vessel be made available merely for one trip and he then promised to give a definite decision on this matter on February 18. In the course of his discussion with these gentlemen Mr. Erkin indicated, they informed me, that he is worried by the delays at Istanbul of refugees in transit because of a failure on the part of the British authorities there to issue promptly the necessary entry visas for Palestine. The Embassy has checked on this point and found that there have been very few cases of delay at Istanbul and these few have been for purely personal reasons on the part of the individuals concerned. Nevertheless, as a result of the statement made by Mr. Erkin to Mr. Eliaash and Mr. Barlas and his suggestion that the British Embassy inform the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that visas for Palestine would be granted within 24 hours on arrival at Istanbul, an officer of the British Embassy has subsequently informed me that an oral statement to the effect indicated would be made to the appropriate official of the Ministry. As a result, it is expected that the number of visas granted by Turkish consular officers in Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary will be increased and that the number arriving in Turkey will consequently increase, provided the Bulgarian bottleneck can be broken or provided evacuation by sea can be effected.

On February 14, 1944, a member of my staff interviewed the official in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs who is handling this whole question and, in the course of their conversation, informed him of the embassy’s interest in a Turkish vessel being made available—the Vatikan was mentioned—for this purpose. The official in question said he thought, in view of the shipping shortage and the risk of loss involved, it was unlikely that a Turkish vessel could be made available. He raised the question of whether the American Government or Allied Governments could not make a vessel available to some international relief organization to carry out the proposed voyages.

The Turkish decision in the matter was in the negative.

The Department will recall from my telegram No. 189, dated January 31, 1944, that a lack of transportation facilities rather than an unwillingness on the part of the Turkish authorities to cooperate was the chief difficulty in effecting the rescue of Jews from the Axis countries. The statement was also made in the telegram under reference that in my opinion unless the transportation facilities were augmented by vessels especially chartered for the purpose it was most unlikely that in present conditions the rail facilities could be materially increased. I reported also that the Turkish authorities had repeatedly assured me of their desire to cooperate but that they insisted that under existing conditions they were unable to increase rail facilities.

It will ...
It will be seen from the foregoing that despite the most strenuous and continuous efforts on the part of the Embassy to facilitate the movement of oppressed Jews from the Axis countries to Palestine, these efforts have to date met with only limited success, primarily because the persons whom it is desired to move are on territory controlled by the enemy who does not permit them to leave for abroad, and secondarily because of transportation difficulties. With regard to this second factor it may be remarked again that the Turkish authorities have been willing to grant more visas for persons to transit Turkey than have been utilized by persons able to leave enemy territory. Approximately three-fourths of the Jews arriving in Turkey from enemy territory have come by rail; the remainder have escaped from Greece by boat. (See page 6, supra.) If a vessel or vessel become available for the transportation of Jews by water from Romanian or Bulgarian ports to Turkey, it is not improbable that last minute difficulties will arise in connection with their actual departure from enemy territory, since as yet there is no guarantee that they will be allowed to depart from such territory for Turkey.

It is to be remembered, in considering the Turkish attitude with regard to this matter, that Turkey's transportation system has never been adequate from the western viewpoint and is far from being adequate in the present situation since Turkey's entry into the war has until very recently been increasingly imminent. There is only one through single track main line from Haydar Pasa (Istanbul) to Aleppo via Ankara and this line has been overburdened with British and American (mostly Lend-Lease) shipments, consisting largely of war materials, moving in a northerly direction and of Turkish exports, consisting largely of Turkish products bought by the United States and the British Empire both for supply and preemptive reasons, moving in a southerly direction. The load which the locomotives have been carrying through the Taurus mountains, through which this line runs, has consistently been the maximum possible, with the result that the addition of even one extra car filled with refugees to a particular train has presented a difficult mechanical problem. Notwithstanding, as has been pointed out before, the Turkish authorities have actually agreed to furnish one car every 10 days to transport 75 children and accompanying adults from Haydar Pasa to Aleppo. With all rolling stock to the maximum, it has been impossible—and in fact unnecessary since the small number of refugees arriving in Turkey has been readily handled—to increase the number of trains to haul refugees.

Should it become possible to move a large number of refugees from Romanian or Bulgarian Black Sea ports to Istanbul they can be moved by water from the ports in question, it may be found desirable to discharge them from the vessels at Batia, rather than at Istanbul, thereby avoiding the difficulties which would arise out of a stay in Istanbul and the necessity of arranging rail or water transport beyond Istanbul. Any plans that may be drawn up for the use of vessels only as far as Istanbul should include provision for furnishing the refugees food and shelter while in Turkey.

Aside from...
Aside from the Jews who have managed to reach Turkey from
Axis countries (some legally and some illegally as set forth above)
a considerable number of Greeks have succeeded in reaching Turkey
from nearby Greek islands. The exact number is not known but it
is considerable. Most of them have proceeded from Turkey to
Syria. The movement of persons of this category is more or less
continuous, although the number moving at any one time is small.
The number of refugees of other national or racial groups reaching
Turkey is negligible.

In the many discussions which I have had on this subject
with the present Prime Minister and former Minister for Foreign
Affairs, Mr. Saracoğlu; with the present Foreign Minister and
former Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kemal Kırıcı; and
with other high Turkish officials, I have invariably endeavored
to persuade them to lend every possible assistance to achieve the
desired end, emphasizing the vital humanitarian principles in-
volved and referring to the self-interest involved (in that any
assistance granted would tend to present Turkey in a favorable
light abroad). The expressions and attitude of these officials
have invariably been one of the desire to cooperate and aid in
every way, despite the many and unavoidable difficulties with
which their country has been and is faced.

As I informed the Department in my telegram No. 870 of
February 16, 1944, I am delighted with the assignment to my
staff in the capacity of attaché of Mr. E. H. Hitchmann for the
special purpose of handling matters pertaining to these refugees.
I am most favorably impressed with his initiative and quick grasp
of the situation, as well as with his general qualifications and
personality. I shall of course extend every possible assistance
to him in this work.

Respectfully yours,

Laurence A. Steinhardt

File No. 640.1
La/Sp

To Department in original and photograph.
TO: Mr. Stettinius

FROM: Mr. Pehle

Attention: Mr. Warren

Attached hereto is a proposed cable from the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and Mr. Hirschman in Ankara, requesting confirmation of a press report that Turkey is prepared to cooperate in assisting Jewish refugees to leave the Balkans.

It will be appreciated if this cable is dispatched at once.

(Signed) J.A. Pehle

Enclosure.
CABLE

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT IN ANKARA.

TO STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMAN FROM THE WAR REFUGE BOARD.

It is reported here in the papers that a high government official in Turkey told the Associated Press on February 13 that Turkey was willing to cooperate with the Palestine Commission and Allied diplomats in assisting Jewish refugees to leave the Balkans. We would appreciate immediate confirmation of this report. Please give us full information at once on the present position of the Turkish Government on this matter.

The War Refuge Board is desirous of making public the cooperative attitude of neutral countries on this matter, and unless you perceive some objection, we would like to be in a position to publicize at once the attitude of Turkey.

It is extremely important that we be kept currently informed of all developments in Turkey relating to the activities of the Board. We have received numerous inquiries from private agencies concerning the above mentioned press report and have been awaiting advice from you as to its accuracy.
FEB 16 1944

TO:  Mr. Travers

FROM:  J. W. Pehle

Will you please arrange to have the attached cable to Ira Hirschmann dispatched today.

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

Attachment

(Send by Special Messenger - 3:20 p.m.)

CC - Mr. Pehle, Mr. Laxford, Mr. DuBois, Mr. Lesser, Mr. Friedman, Miss Modol, Mr. Pollak

1/16/44
Received your cable of February 12 from Cairo. Pleased
to hear of your early arrival in Ankara. Keep me fully advised
as to developments in Turkey and as to any and all possibilities
for immediate action which can be hastened by action of the War
Refugee Board. J. W. Pohle, Acting Executive Director.
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (BR)

Secretary of State
Washington

317, February 12, 2 p.m.

FOR JOHN H. PHELLE DIRECTOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD

FROM HIRSCHLEMM:

Just returned from Palestine and arrive Ankara Monday. Your statements have aroused excited hopes in desperate situation. Essential you give Steinhardt top Washington backing and necessity for immediate resultful action as now I know Turkey is bottleneck crux. Halifax should be simultaneously pressed to give similar instructions his representatives there as this will help Steinhardt and vice versa. See possibilities for immediate action but tempo exasperatingly slow. Get ready for concrete cables from Ankara.

KIRK

EDA
GM-531
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Governmental agency. (BR)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

262, February 14, 5 p.m.

The presence in Ankara of Dr. Herzog, Chief Rabbi of Palestine and Dr. Mordecai Eliash, who accompanied him, the expected arrival tonight of Ira Hirschmann from New York and the consequent day-to-day discussions with the Turkish authorities are necessarily delaying my report. (Department's 118, February 11) I am hopeful that it will be possible to forward a detailed report by the pouch leaving Ankara on February 21.

STEINHARDT

BB