Weekly Reports - 1945

000599

Weekly Reports

JUN 9 - 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 6/7/45

000600

JUN 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 6/7/45

00601

JUN 8 - 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 6/7/45

00602

JUN 8 - 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT:inp 6/7/45

00603

JUN 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer
William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT:inp 6/7/45

000604

JUN 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 6/7/45 JGP

000605

JUN 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 6/7/45

00006

JUN 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Harrison:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Earl G. Harrison,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 6/7/45

000007

JUN 8 - 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from May 7 to June 2, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 6/7/45

000608

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONF[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Period from May 7 to June 2, 1945

V-E DAY

With the surrender of the German armies, much of the Board's work in Europe has been automatically terminated, inasmuch as the Executive Order establishing the Board strictly limits its activities to the rescue and relief of victims of enemy oppression in enemy-occupied territory. Accordingly, Representatives Olsen and McClelland were advised that relief and assistance of refugees liberated from the Germans are not within the Board's jurisdiction and that requests received by them for such help should be referred to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the appropriate military authorities, the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, private refugee organizations, or other national or international groups authorized to deal with matters of this nature.

Our representatives were requested to begin immediately to wind up all Board activities in Sweden and Switzerland and to prepare final reports. On the basis of their estimates of the time required for this purpose and the expected period necessary to accomplish the winding-up process here, appropriate recommendations have been submitted to the Bureau of the Budget with a view to concluding the Board's activities and accomplishing its final liquidation within approximately sixty days after the end of the current fiscal year on June 30, 1945.

OPERATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

In view of the foregoing, Representative McClelland was advised that all shipments of Board parcels should cease and was requested to take stock of all Board parcels still in Switzerland and to report the numbers and location to us. He cabled in reply that there were approximately 28,792 undistributed Board parcels on hand in warehouses in Geneva and that shipments of 31,208 parcels out of the 60,000 originally sent to Switzerland have been made as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| March 16 | To Theresienstadt | 1,170 |
| March 16 | To Vienna area | 4,902 |
| March 19 | To Theresienstadt | 492 |
| April 16 | To Mauthausen | 900 |
| April 17 | To Theresienstadt | 4,230 |
| April 19 | To Dachau and other camps in Wurttemberg and Bavaria | 3,660 |

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| April 23 | To Landsberg-am-Lech | 6,550 |
| May 1 | To temporary Intercross deportee camp at Hoechst | 1,500 |
| May 4 | To incoming convoys of rescued detainees from Mauthausen | 604 |
| May 11 | To Bolzano area | 5,000 |

Shortly after the cessation of hostilities, Representatives Katzki and McClelland advised us that reports of International Red Cross representatives who recently returned to Switzerland from Germany, Austria, and Northern Italy indicated that, while Allied military authorities were making every effort to assure adequate relief to liberated civil detainees, deportees, etc., an unavoidable delay in reaching many of the persons formerly aided by the Board through Intercross is being experienced because of the magnitude and complexity of the task and the difficulties of transportation and distribution which are involved. It was stated that emergency calls for aid for liberated detainees and deportees in temporary agglomerations and on the roads have been sent by Intercross field workers and that a large number of sick persons remaining in concentration camps were also reported to be in need. Apparently, this is a period of emergency need the duration of which is as yet undetermined, and it was reported that local Allied commanders having to deal with these displaced persons welcome such shipments as the International Red Cross has been able to get through to them. On the basis of this information, supplemented by reports from other sources, and in view of the fact that Intercross truck convoys were still leaving Switzerland periodically, so that it is technically able to continue relief shipments to meet this situation, our representatives strongly recommended that the 28,792 undistributed Board parcels remaining in Switzerland again be made available to Intercross to enable it to fill this temporary urgent demand until the situation becomes clearer. The Board promptly cabled its approval of the shipment of these parcels out of Switzerland on condition that military authorities permit Intercross to continue relief shipments to concentration camp survivors.

Because of the great interest of the Board and its representatives for so many months in the problem of concentration camp relief, and in order that first-hand current information as to the needs in such camps might be obtained, we cabled Representative McClelland authorizing him to visit some of the liberated concentration camps, particularly Dachau, as soon as possible, and to make arrangements with appropriate military authorities for the necessary permission and travel facilities.

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McClelland's most recent report describes the splendid work of the International Red Cross in continuing distribution of food relief, including Board parcels, to liberated detainees in southern Germany and Austria. Four trucks were sent to Linz on May 28 with forty tons of food, including 2,650 Board parcels, for the detainees liberated from Mauthausen. In view of reports that some 27,000 liberated detainees are leading a most precarious existence in the Linz area, with from 300 to 400 persons per day dying from disease and starvation, McClelland has requested Intercross to prepare a second truck convoy to leave for Linz about June 4, when he expects to be in that area himself visiting camps to determine where the remaining Board stocks can be most effectively used. On May 29, twenty-eight trucks left Switzerland for Pilsen, with Theresienstadt the final destination. The convoy carried 3,600 Board parcels with other relief goods and was accompanied by two Czech officials who will attempt to arrange Czech and Russian clearance so that the relief goods may proceed to Theresienstadt. Another Intercross convoy was scheduled to leave on June 1 with eighty tons of supplies, including 5,000 Board parcels, for distribution to released civilian detainees in the Salzburg area.

Reports from Representative McClelland disclose that it was possible for the International Red Cross to utilize for the relief of Luxembourg deportees and detainees in Germany only a small portion of the funds made available for this American Labor-sponsored project. The interested agencies are now negotiating to have these funds used for the relief of families of Luxembourgers who were deported and died in German concentration camps or were executed by the Nazis and to assist returning deportees in the reestablishment of their homes.

It is understood from a private source that the Swiss are prepared to accept for a temporary stay and to provide for the maintenance of some 2,000 children from German camps.

Theresienstadt

From a representative of a private organization we learned that an International Red Cross delegate who recently visited Theresienstadt reported that of the 30,000 Jews there now, some 17,000 are from the original group of internees and 13,000 are recent arrivals from other camps. The largest national group consists of about 6,000 Czechoslovakians, and approximately 5,000 former Germans comprise the second largest group. The new arrivals brought typhus into the camp, which has resulted in conditions of great hardship, and medical

0006 11

supplies are urgently required. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was reported to have sent three planes of supplies from London, and it was indicated that, if the necessary official permission could be obtained for supplies to be flown in, the International Red Cross will send one plane from Switzerland with supplies chiefly from the United States. It was stated that in addition the Red Cross is sending several trucks of food, supplied in large part by the private agency represented by this informant, and that similar convoys with such supplies are being sent to Dachau, Landsberg, and other camps for the internees there.

More exact figures concerning the inmates at Theresienstadt were contained in a late cable from McClelland in which he quoted information given to him by an Intercross delegate who was at the camp in early May. It was stated that there were 17,556 Jewish deportees in Theresienstadt as of April 6 and that 12,863 new deportees were brought in from camps all over Germany, such as Bergen Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, and Mauthausen, between that date and May 5. Of the latter number, 88 persons were dead on arrival and 221 others died shortly thereafter, so that the total number of survivors there as of May 5 was 30,110. The camp is now reported to be under Czech control.

EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

About the middle of May it was reported that the evacuation of the two groups of Bergen Belsen and Theresienstadt refugees probably would not be completed before the middle of June at the earliest. On May 24, Representative McClelland cabled us that the date for the movement from Switzerland of the first convoy of approximately 1,000 refugees, to go via Marseille to Taranto, thence to UNRRA camps in southern Italy, had been definitely fixed for June 4, the second convoy to follow two weeks later. However, a late cable from McClelland brought the information that, since the authorization on May 30 for seven hundred Palestine certificates to be delivered to Zionist refugees from Bergen Belsen and Theresienstadt now in Switzerland, some 1,100 persons among the two groups scheduled for evacuation have taken the position that they do not wish to leave Switzerland until they can proceed directly to Palestine. While the scheduled departure of the first convoy has been indefinitely postponed as a result of these developments, it was indicated that efforts will be made to arrange for the departure about the end of June of a convoy of those refugees who do not desire to go to Palestine.

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OPERATIONS FROM SWEDEN

According to information which Representative McClelland received from the International Red Cross, the 140,000 Board parcels which were shipped from Goteborg on the SS MAGDALENA on April 16 arrived in Lübeck, and since the Intercross delegate at Lübeck had previously distributed an unknown number of parcels under his control from other sources to civil detainees in northern Germany, particularly in Ravensbrück, the stock of Board parcels has been diminished to the extent necessary to replace these advances. Representative Olsen's most recent information indicated that the Intercross delegate in Lübeck was distributing Board parcels to civilian internees in the immediate area and whenever possible was dispatching food packages by trucks to various concentration camps within reach. A cable from Representative Olsen advised us that, while more exact figures cannot be obtained until communications with Lübeck are reestablished, it was known that a fairly substantial shipment of parcels was forwarded to Ravensbrück quite recently, and that it was the opinion of an American Red Cross representative and the Intercross delegate in Goteborg that most of the Board packages in Lübeck have now been distributed.

On behalf of agencies interested in the American Labor-sponsored project for rescue and relief activities in Norway, which were conducted under the Board's supervision and which the Board helped to finance, Representative Olsen's views as to specific needs for a follow-up relief program in liberated Norway were requested. The Swedish group advanced a five-point program, for which all the necessary arrangements as to the procurement and shipment of supplies have been made, and its proposals have been transmitted by the Board to the interested groups here.

EMERGENCY REFUGEE SHELTER

A group of thirteen persons from the Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, left this country on board the GRIPSHOLM on May 31. All of them are nationals of Yugoslavia, and they are the first of the refugees brought here from Southern Italy to be repatriated.

REPORTS FROM LIBERATED AREAS

A report which reached us from a private source stated that since May 21 deportees have been returning to France at the average rate of one hundred per day. About 25% were said to arrive from the east through Odessa, the rest from Germany, and it appears that a large majority of those who have thus

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far returned are of non-French nationalities. Another report from the same source indicates that, as a result of negotiations on the part of military authorities and private agencies with French officials, the French Government has agreed to permit the temporary admission of a thousand children from German concentration camps.

A private organization representative who recently visited Northern Italy reported that 150 Italians and other nationals who had just come from mountain hideouts were found in Turin and that there were in Bologna 400 of the 1,200 Jews formerly there. Smaller numbers of the Jewish communities in other towns have returned, and others are believed to be still in hiding. It was stated that in many instances the clergy was particularly helpful in preventing deportations. A complete record of the persons interned at the concentration camp of Fossoli di Carpi and records of the camps at Monticelli and Salsomaggiore were obtained. Of the 400 Jews reported interned at Bolzano, over 100 have returned to Milan. The others have been urged to remain at Bolzano temporarily in order to relieve the overcrowded situation in Milan. Apparently there is some unorganized movement from camps in Germany to Italy which is creating an additional problem.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

0006 14

MAY 17 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 5/16/45

0006 15

MAY 17 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 5/16/45

00016

MAY 17 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 5/16/45

000017

MAY 17 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 5/16/45

000018

MAY 17 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 5/16/45

0006 19

Weekly Reports

MAURICE BOWER SAUL
WALTER BIDDLE SAUL
JOSEPH NEFF EWING
RAYMOND M. REMICK
EARL G. HARRISON
WILLIAM E. MIKELL, JR
JOSEPH A. LAMORELLE
EDWARD A. G. PORTER
FRANCIS H. BOHLEN, JR
ALLEN S. OLMSTED, 2ND
EDMUND R. FINEGAN
THOMAS P. MIKELL
JOHN KENNEDY EWING, 3RD
SAMUEL E. EWING, JR.
MURRAY FORST THOMPSON
HENRY C. REMICK
WILLIAM H. S. WELLS
HARRY E. SPROGELL
F. A. VAN DENBERGH, JR.
ROBERT W. SAYRE
GORDON W. GABELL
C. WALTER RANDALL, JR.

LAW OFFICES OF
SAUL, EWING, REMICK & HARRISON
2301-17 PACKARD BUILDING

TELEPHONE: RITTENHOUSE 7777
CABLE ADDRESS: BIDSAL
GRIER BARTOL

PHILADELPHIA 2

June 20, 1945

Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear General O'Dwyer:

I am very grateful to you for your thoughtfulness in sending me a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

I always find these reports most interesting and helpful.

Sincerely yours,

Earl G. Harrison

EGH:P

000620

MAY 17 1945

My dear Mr. Harrison:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Earl G. Harrison,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 5/16/45

00021

MAY 17 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 5/16/45

000622

MAY 19 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT:inp 5/16/45

00623

MAY 19 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT: inp 5/16/45

000624

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CON[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the period from April 23 to May 5, 1945

OPERATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

During the last week in April four convoys of trucks brought more than a thousand detainees to Switzerland from the concentration camp at Mauthausen, near Linz. Two columns comprising twenty-eight trucks arrived on April 23 and 24, and a third convoy of fourteen trucks reached Switzerland on April 25. Representatives Katzki and McClelland cabled us of the arrival of these trucks and advised us that the three convoys were officially reported to have evacuated a total of 781 detainees, most of whom are women of French, Belgian, and Dutch nationalities. The fourth convoy consisting of thirteen prison-of-war trucks arrived on April 30 after a long and difficult trip during which ten persons died. Most of these detainees are French women, and there were reported to be few Jewish women among them. This group of about 300 evacuees was expected to be the last which would arrive from Mauthausen although several trucks which were in the original convoy had not yet returned. The deportees rescued from this camp reported that conditions there were frightful and that the most brutal type of extermination was in progress.

According to reports of two International Red Cross delegates who were at the concentration camp of Theresienstadt on April 7 and of another individual who visited the camp on April 16, more than 20,000 Jewish detainees were there in the middle of April. Included in this number were 8,000 former Germans, 8,000 Czechs from the "protectorate," 1,900 Hungarians, 1,000 Slovaks, 800 Dutch, and about 300 Danes. The latter were said to have been removed from the ghetto on April 15 by Swedish Red Cross trucks. It was indicated that about 40% of the inmates of this camp had been transferred there during the course of the past two or three months, particularly the Czechs and the Hungarians, the latter from Austria. Apparently most of the remaining Latin American document holders and Palestine certificate holders at Bergen Belsen had also been transferred to Theresienstadt. One of the Intercross delegates visited the camp again on April 21 and reported that 4,000 new Jewish internees, most of them apparently from the "protectorate," had arrived since his earlier visit. He described conditions there as good in every respect. A late cable from Representative McClelland reported that an SS official is said to have given assurance that the status quo at Theresienstadt, the

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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last large concentration camp remaining in the hands of the Germans, would be maintained and that there would be no last minute extermination of its inmates.

The individual who visited Theresienstadt on April 16 reported that on April 12 he had also visited the camp of Hamburg-Neuengamme, which he described as a relatively good one. He estimated the number of inmates at from 9,000 to 10,000, half of whom were said to be Danes and Norwegians who enjoyed fairly good treatment and were actively assisted by the Swedish Red Cross. The others were reported to be Russians and Poles. This informant also reported that there were close to 30,000 Hungarian Jews on former Austrian territory at the beginning of April, two-thirds of them being forced labor battalions of the Hungarian army, one-third being persons who were deserted there in June 1944. It was estimated that approximately 80% of these Jews were left behind when the Germans withdrew.

According to these visitors to Theresienstadt, four truck loads of relief goods, which left Switzerland on March 29 as reported earlier, were satisfactorily received and distributed. On April 25 Representative McClelland reported that since March 23 there had been shipped from Board stocks in Switzerland approximately 16,790 parcels destined for Theresienstadt, Landsberg-am-Lech, and camps in the Vienna area. In addition, fuel obtained through the Board's efforts made possible shipments of substantial relief supplies furnished by private organizations. With the development of German territory northeast of the Swiss border into a zone of military operations, it appeared that further shipments of relief supplies might be precluded. Two days later, however, Representative McClelland cabled that the outlook appeared more favorable and that an attempt would be made by Intercross to dispatch at least one more convoy to Mauthausen and possibly other smaller convoys to Theresienstadt and Landsberg. Plans were also being made to send Board parcels with an emergency Intercross truck convoy to the Bolzano region in northern Italy to carry relief to several thousands of badly undernourished Italian deportees who were escaping across the Brenner pass into Italy during the last half of April under conditions of great physical hardship. Several hundred Jewish deportees who were reported still at the concentration camp of Gries near Bolzano were also to be included in this relief action. Four Swiss commercial trucks, which left Switzerland on April 25 to repatriate Swiss citizens from Austria, carried 8,550 Board parcels and other relief goods to be off-loaded at Landsberg-am-Lech en route.

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EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

Plans for the evacuation of the two groups of Bergen Belsen and Theresienstadt refugees were reported by Representative McClelland to be shaping up satisfactorily, the move being coordinated with military authorities and UNRRA, with Swiss authorities handling all preliminary preparations, including the formation of convoys, the supplying of railroad cars, medical personnel, etc. The two groups include refugees of Dutch, Hungarian, Rumanian, Czech, Yugoslav, Polish, and former German nationalities, and all except those of Dutch nationality are to be evacuated. The destination of the refugees has been changed from Philippeville to southern Italy, and it is expected that their evacuation will be effected in two groups of approximately 1,100 persons each, with possibly a third smaller group later. Preparations in Switzerland for the movement were practically completed on May 1, and it was indicated that the first convoy probably would leave by the middle of next week.

OPERATIONS FROM SWEDEN

It was learned that, instead of approximately 5,000 Danish and Norwegian Jews as indicated in the Board's report for the preceding period, the number of persons in the group which actually reached Sweden was 425. All of these refugees are of Danish nationality, and it was stated that informed sources have indicated that this group comprises the living remainder of approximately 525 Jews originally deported from Denmark, the others having died in concentration camps. The arrival of fifty Norwegian Jews from a concentration camp in Norway was reported on May 3.

A cable from Minister Johnson summarized the report of a Red Cross representative who recently visited Malmö to investigate the condition of 7,000 refugees released from concentration camps in Germany and evacuated by the Swedish Red Cross to Sweden via Denmark with the help of the Danish Red Cross. The majority of these refugees are women released from Ravensbrück, with a small number of men from Neuengamme and other concentration camps; included are 2,000 Swedish Germans or German Swedes, 1,000 Polish men and women, 800 French women, 20 British women, 29 Dutch women, 59 Belgians, 7 women claiming American citizenship, and some 3,000 Danish and Norwegian men and women. Volunteers from various organizations in the city of Malmö, which is serving as a quarantine and receiving center, are caring for the evacuees.

000627

According to the refugees, only those persons in the best physical condition were released from Ravensbrück, and doctors' statements indicate that the average evacuee patient is at half her normal weight. Two International Red Cross ships were reported to have left Lübeck on April 30 with 1,000 more refugees to be taken to Malmö. Another cable from Stockholm brought the information that about 1,200 Jewesses are among approximately 3,000 women who have arrived in Sweden from Ravensbrück and that the arrival of other women from that camp is expected.

Information from a confidential source indicated that there had been about 50,000 Jews in Bergen Belsen and 6,000 in Buchenwald. (According to another report believed to be reliable, there are 3,000 Jews at Buchenwald, of whom 600 are orphan children.) There were said to be an additional 20,000 in Mauthausen, 20,000 Jewish women in Ravensbrück, and 25,000 Jews in Theresienstadt. The number in smaller concentration camps in southern Germany and in Austria was not indicated.

UNITED JEWISH WELFARE FUND CAMPAIGN

The campaign of the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Los Angeles to raise the funds required for its 1945 programs opened on May 1. In an address delivered at the Hotel Ambassador in Los Angeles to the opening meeting of the campaign, Mr. O'Dwyer, as Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, sketched the progress of rescue and relief work during the early war years and the developments in these activities which resulted from the impetus provided by the United States Government with the establishment of the War Refugee Board. Tribute was paid to the devotion of the private agencies whose resources and energies were directed to meet unparalleled human need and whose organization and facilities find an equally vital need now with the shift of emphasis from rescue work in enemy territory to the task of keeping alive and rehabilitating those who have been saved.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

00028

APR 25 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 4/21/45

000629

APR 25 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 4/21/45

00030

APR 25 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 4/21/45

00031

APR 25 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 4/21/45

00032

APR 25 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT:inp 4/21/45

00033

APR 25 1945

My dear Mr. Harrison:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Earl G. Harrison,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT:inp 4/21/45

00034

APR 25 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT: inp 4/21/45

00035

APR 25 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 4/21/45

00036

APR 25 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONF[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the period from April 9 to 21, 1945

OPERATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

Cables received from Representative McClelland reported the departure of twenty-four trucks from Geneva to make relief distributions in German territory. On April 11, six trucks loaded with nineteen tons of food parcels, two with gasoline, and two carrying repair parts, tools, etc., and a team of mechanics left to go via Kreutzlingen, unload food at the concentration camps of Oranienburg and Ravensbrück en route, and then proceed on to Lübeck to remain for work in that area. Another special convoy of ten trucks carrying 42,000 kilograms of relief supplies including 900 Board parcels left on April 17 for Mauthausen, which is twenty-five kilometers east of Linz, Austria. In view of the rapid approach of the eastern fighting front and the possibility that the presence of additional Intercross personnel might also afford an opportunity for protective action at this critical time, it was the feeling of Intercross that an extraordinary effort should be made to send parcels in to this large combined concentration camp and penitentiary, said always to have been among the worst in the Nazi system, where there are a great many detainees of Polish, French and Italian nationality, as well as smaller numbers of other nationalities. Leaving with the Mauthausen convoy were four trucks destined for the Dachau area carrying only gasoline to be used to operate trucks distributing relief to camps in that area from the Intercross depot. Ten more trucks were expected to be made available to Intercross before the end of the month for carrying relief to unassimilated persons of all categories.

In addition to the parcel stocks in Switzerland and Sweden, the Board has obtained by purchase from the War Department 206,000 parcels in Switzerland originally packed for distribution under the auspices of the American Red Cross to

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By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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prisoners of war. Representative McClelland was advised of the acquisition of these parcels under the condition that they be repackaged before delivery by Intercross and that they be delivered only to concentration camps. The American Red Cross representative in Geneva is receiving instructions to turn these parcels over to the Board, and we have requested Representative McClelland to arrange for the repacking, which he has reported can be accomplished at the rate of 3,000 parcels per day.

We learned from Representative McClelland that a truck convoy arrived at Kreutzlingen, Switzerland, on the night of April 10 with three hundred French women from the concentration camp of Ravensbrück. Since these women were exchanged for German civilians, who it is understood were taken in Alsace, their release does not represent any concession on the part of the Germans without a concrete reciprocal consideration. After lengthy negotiations by the International Red Cross with the Germans, there appears to be a willingness to permit the exit from Germany only of civilian detainees of French and Belgian nationality in exchange for similar groups of German civilians now held by the French and the Belgians. While the Germans do not insist that these exchanges be on a person for person basis, they are to be limited to women, children, and elderly people; there is no evidence that the Germans will be willing to allow the evacuation of women who are being used as labor, although the International Red Cross is continuing to negotiate for this. Since seven Jewish women were included in the convoy of French women, it does not seem that the Germans are discriminating against Jews within these national groups.

The Nazis were reported by these women to be following a policy of simply working the detainees at Ravensbrück to death; when they are no longer able to work, they are literally discarded. There is, unhappily, every reason to believe that this practice is being followed with other similar groups of Schutzhaeftlinge and that the statistics reported from Ravensbrück probably predict the findings which may be expected with regard to civilian detainees in general. It was stated that the Intercross delegate who accompanied the trucks bringing the women from Ravensbrück was informed by an SS official that Intercross could evacuate all the remaining French women at this camp as soon as it wished. However, out of at least 3,000 French women who were there last October, there seem to be only 300 still left. Half of the 3,000 are believed to have died, and it is thought that the many hundreds still unaccounted for are in work companies detached from the camp.

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As a result of this information, the International Red Cross is making a special effort for the immediate procurement of a few buses from the Swiss army to supplement the prison-of-war parcel trucks now available for such evacuations, and the possibility of using a blocked prison-of-war parcel train for a similar purpose is also being examined. It is hoped that the removal of some detainees of other than French and Belgian nationality may be accomplished on an "ad hoc" basis, depending on the attitude of the individual camp commanders.

Our Legation in Bern advised us that the Swiss Legation in Germany reported under date of April 6 that, authorization having just been obtained to visit Theresienstadt, a representative was being sent to that camp very soon, and that it was endeavoring to obtain authorization to visit Bergen Belsen.

Representatives of private organizations and the Swiss police informed McClelland of the arrival at Konstanz on April 18 of sixty-nine Jewish refugees, most of them apparently from Bratislava, and that they were to be admitted to Switzerland on the following day. One of these informants was said to have just returned to Switzerland from an extended trip, including Theresienstadt and Bergen Belsen, in the company of an SS official. He reported that there are 20,000 Jews at Theresienstadt, including many new arrivals from Austria and Slovakia, and that the SS official who traveled with him arranged for the capitulation of the camp of Bergen Belsen with all of its inmates. McClelland asked that information be obtained as soon as possible from military authorities concerning detainees and conditions found in this and other camps in the line of the advance of our armies.

Relief Operations in Yugoslavia

According to information which Representative McClelland received from the International Red Cross, the camps of Jablanac, Jasenovac, and Staragradiska, located along the Sava River about one hundred kilometers southeast of Zagreb, are in territory which is now a battle zone or has been taken over by Marshal Tito. Shipments of relief goods from Switzerland to this region are unfortunately no longer physically possible, and it was indicated that the only possible channel for relief goods for this area would seem to be through Italy.

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OPERATIONS FROM SWEDEN

Representative McClelland relayed to us information supplied by the International Red Cross concerning the number of Board parcels shipped from Goteborg either to concentration camps or to Lübeck for later delivery to camps. The details are as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Shipped to Hamburg-Neuengamme on March 5, | 10,800 | |
| Shipped to Hamburg-Neuengamme on March 16, | 10,800 | |
| Shipped to Ravensbrück on March 17, | 9,600 | |
| Shipped to Intercross depot at Lübeck on March 17, | 13,200 | 44,400 |
| Released for distribution by the Swedish Red Cross, | | 39,324 |
| Parcels remaining at Goteborg on April 14 | | 140,604 |
| Original number of parcels at Goteborg | | 224,328 |

A later cable from McClelland informed us of the shipment of the remaining 140,000 parcels to Lübeck on the SS MAGDALENA on April 16.

Our Legation in Stockholm cabled the Board and our Embassy in London that, as a result of the release of Board parcels for distribution by the Swedish Red Cross as indicated above, the proposed expansion of the parcel program of a private organization in Sweden is not now of such immediate urgency. Accordingly, the supplies to be purchased for the larger program will be stock-piled in Sweden for immediate post-war delivery.

A late cable from Minister Johnson brought the news of the arrival of approximately 5,000 Danish and Norwegian Jews in Malmo on April 18. These refugees are believed to comprise virtually all of the Danish and Norwegian Jews in German concentration camps and their release for transfer to an especially arranged Swedish internment camp was achieved by a Swedish Red Cross official through special negotiations conducted during recent weeks. Minister Johnson advised us that the Swedish Foreign Office is endeavoring to secure the release of Norwegian Jews held in Grini under a similar agreement for special internment in Sweden.

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TURKISH-GERMAN EXCHANGE

Following receipt of the information that a number of Jewish refugees had been included in a recent Turkish-German exchange, a Turkish official informed our Embassy in Ankara that these individuals were embarked on the DROTTNINGHOLM without prior notification to or the consent of the Turkish Government and that few of them have any claim to Turkish nationality. We authorized our Embassy to renew if necessary the assurances given to the Turkish Government by this Government early last year with respect to the maintenance and evacuation of refugees admitted to Turkey. At our request, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration cabled instructions to its Cairo mission concerning the action to be taken if it should become necessary for UNRRA to assume responsibility for the care and shelter of these refugees.

Information since cabled from Ankara indicated that, of a total of 330 exchangee passengers who arrived at Istanbul on April 10, 250 were permitted official entry to Turkey. Pending a decision as to their ultimate destination, the remaining 80 persons (7 Jews of former Turkish nationality who have been deprived of their Turkish citizenship, 70 Jews without documents of identification, and 3 persons who are apparently Turkish nationals but have no passports) were temporarily put aboard a vessel at Istanbul, where they were questioned by Turkish officials in an effort to establish their identity, nationality, etc. A later cable from our Embassy brought the information that hotel rooms have been engaged for these 80 refugees and instructions have been issued by the Turkish Foreign Office to allow them to come ashore. Discussions by our Embassy with the British Embassy regarding their admission to Palestine were reported to be progressing favorably.

SPANISH REPUBLICAN REFUGEES IN PORTUGAL

According to information reaching us from a private source, particulars concerning Spanish Republican refugees in Portugal have been submitted to the Intergovernmental Committee in London through the American Embassy in Lisbon, and lists of the refugees which were furnished to the Mexican Legation in Lisbon have been forwarded to the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs in Mexico. It was indicated that these lists contained the names of 75 single men in hiding in Lisbon and 22 who are imprisoned, as well as the names of 19 families, 3 of whom are imprisoned.

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JEWISH REFUGEES IN SHANGHAI

A report from Minister Johnson in Stockholm outlined the results of discussions and negotiations concerning the proposal advanced some time ago for the evacuation to Sweden of part of a group of Jewish Rabbis and rabbinical scholars who are refugees in Shanghai. It was indicated that the Government of Japan has consistently taken the position that release of the refugee group would be allowed, apparently to relieve congested conditions in Shanghai, provided outside transportation facilities are furnished for this purpose. Rail transportation facilities from Shanghai to the Russian border are said to be reserved entirely for Japanese military purposes, and there are neither Japanese nor Russian vessels running between Shanghai and Vladivostok. In the absence of any available neutral shipping in the Shanghai area, and in view of the possibility that additional obstacles may result from the deterioration of Russo-Japanese relations, our Legation was of the belief that the removal of this group under presently existing conditions is a technical impossibility.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000643

APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT

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APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 4/19/45

00045

APR 20 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer
William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 4/19/45

00046

APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Harrison:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Earl G. Harrison,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT: inp 4/19/45

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APR 20 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 4/19/45

00048

APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 4/19/45

000449

APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 4/19/45

00050

APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT:inp 4/19/45

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APR 20 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 4/19/45

000652

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONF[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the period from March 26 to April 7, 1945

SITUATION IN GERMAN-CONTROLLED TERRITORY

From late reports, it seems clear that the situation of civilian internees in Germany and German-occupied areas in very precarious. Camp populations are being shifted from one area to another, on foot and over long distances, and since thousands of persons are unable to endure the rigors of these forced marches, the number of deaths is increasing. It is feared that, as the Germans are faced with mounting difficulties, they will cease all attempts to feed internees who are not useful in their war effort. The rapidity of recent military developments has the paradoxical effect of rendering problematical the fullest execution of our feeding and evacuation programs and at the same time redoubling the importance of measures to bring relief to detainees who otherwise may not receive even the minimum quantities of food necessary to sustain their lives.

While news reports from Germany indicate that almost all internal telephone and telegraph communications are disrupted, so that any general last-minute extermination of large groups of civil detainees may be precluded by lack of centralized SS control, it is feared that the Nazi program for the extermination of these people may nevertheless be carried out not only by the Nazi hierarchy but by organized or roving bands of terrorists and by individual Germans. The Board presented this situation to the Department of State with a strong recommendation that serious and immediate consideration be given to the issuance by this Government of a new warning directed to all groups and individuals in Germany and stating that this Government considers such acts as death caused by starvation and neglect the same as murder in cold blood and punishable as war crimes.

Turkish-German Exchange - Reports of Exchangees

As a result of a recently effected Turkish-German exchange, more than 130 Sephardic Jews claiming Turkish nationality left Lisbon on March 29 en route to Istanbul as a part of a group of 700 Turkish citizens. It was reported that these refugees, all of whom are without documentation, were released from Bergen Belsen and that there were included in the group 32 women recently transferred from Ravensbrück, 2 from Auschwitz, and 5 from Theresienstadt.

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According to information furnished by the refugees, large numbers of internees have been transferred from camps in Poland and there were said to be between 45,000 and 50,000 persons interned at Bergen Belsen and approximately 50,000 at Ravensbrück. Of the latter, 5,000 are Jews, for the most part Hungarian. The group of 155 Spanish Sephardics deported from Athens were reported to be still at Bergen Belsen but were expected to leave soon for Switzerland. Although there are apparently no basic changes since the last reliable reports, conditions in the camps were said to be terrible, and all of the refugees urged that food be sent to the camps.

RELIEF AND EVACUATION PROJECTS

Operations from Switzerland

Representatives Mann, McClelland, and Katzki met in Paris to discuss with military authorities certain phases of transportation problems incident to the sending of relief parcels to civilian detainees in Germany and German-held territory and the removal of such detainees to safety in Switzerland. As a result of these discussions, a number of truck tires and tubes were obtained and arrangements were made for weekly deliveries of gasoline. Representative Katzki is now in Switzerland assisting McClelland in working out the details of the program.

Prior to his departure for Paris, Representative McClelland reported from Bern that several large trucks obtained on a rental basis in Switzerland were to be available soon to transport relief supplies to civil detainees in the Buchenwald and Vienna areas. A smaller number of trucks, obtained commercially by a private organization with Representative McClelland's assistance, were expected to leave shortly with relief supplies for internees in Bergen Belsen. (It was later reported that these trucks left on March 29 for Theresienstadt instead of Bergen Belsen.) It was indicated that, with tires available, more trucks could be rented in Switzerland, and there were prospects of obtaining additional vehicles from other sources. In addition to truck transportation, one railway car carrying 1,170 Board parcels and other relief supplies destined for Theresienstadt and two cars carrying 4,900 Board parcels as well as other relief materials for the Vienna area were scheduled to go forward about March 24.

After his return to Bern, Representative McClelland informed us that Swiss trucks were being equipped with the tires and tubes which had been secured but that the only trucks available in Switzerland for this purpose were of the type that burn Diesel oil instead of gasoline. With the

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cooperation of the American and British Legations with regard to blockade aspects of replacement, a quantity of Diesel oil was released from Swiss commercial sources for the use of the International Red Cross.

Late reports from Representative McClelland outline plans of Intercross for parcel distributions. In view of the rapidly worsening condition of detainees in the concentration camps of Oranienburg, Ravensbrück, and Hamburg-Neuengamme, and in view of the imminent possibility that the Berlin-Lübeck-Hamburg area, where no trucks are presently available, may soon be cut off, first efforts are being directed to the dispatch of supplies and means of transport to this region. Five trucks were scheduled to leave Switzerland on April 9 for Lübeck to unload supplies at Bergen Belsen on route and then work out of Lübeck distributing to concentrations of detainees at Ravensbrück and Hamburg-Neuengamme Board parcels shipped from Goteborg. Intercross is checking on the number of Board parcels already at Lübeck, and it hopes to be able to distribute all of such parcels in this area within about three weeks time. A shipment of some ten tons of relief goods for the women's concentration camp at Ravensbrück is to be carried by a small convoy of wood-burning trucks which belong to a Swiss commercial concern and which are expected to leave soon for Denmark to repatriate Swiss citizens there.

Probably the greater part of relief shipments by truck will be made to the Munich region and areas east and northeast of that point which it is felt may be accessible for a longer period than camps in the northern areas. Deliveries will be made to camps of Dachau, Landsberg-am-Lech, Flossenburg, and Mauthausen near Linz, as well as emergency relief distributions to evacuated deportees on the roads. Four trucks with a capacity of 3,200 kilograms each are scheduled to leave on April 12 or 13 for Dachau, where they will remain to distribute parcels to a large number of smaller camps in this area administered from Dachau. Within a few days the balance of approximately 50,000 Board parcels remaining in Switzerland are expected to be shipped by rail to the new Intercross depot at Ravensburg, between the Swiss border and Munich. The Division of Special Assistance of the International Red Cross is soon to receive eleven more trucks, which will be used to move these parcels on as rapidly as possible from the depot to accessible camps near Munich and to the east and northeast.

Operations from Sweden

Representative McClelland was informed by the International Red Cross that two railroad cars containing 5,400 Board parcels each left Goteborg on March 16 for the women's concentration

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camp at Ravensbrück and that two other cars carrying 4,800 Board parcels each left for the Hamburg-Neuengamme concentration camp on March 17. We were advised by our Legation in Stockholm that the Intercross delegate at Goteborg has reported shipments of Board parcels totaling 28,800 to Hamburg-Neuengamme and 12,800 to Ravensbrück. Representative Olsen has been authorized to make available to the Swedish Red Cross or the Swedish Y. M. C. A. 40,000 of the parcels remaining at Goteborg for delivery to internees at Bergen Belsen.

According to the report of a private organization representative who recently returned to London from Sweden, a Swedish Red Cross official has succeeded in obtaining from the Germans approval for the establishment near Weimar of a special camp for Danish and Norwegian civilian internees, to be under the protection and administration of the Swedish Red Cross. The suggestion was made that the Germans be approached with a proposal for the establishment of similar camps for Jews, and it was indicated that the Swedish Government and the Swedish Red Cross are willing to cooperate in such a plan.

EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

Recent information from military authorities indicated that the earliest possible date for moving the two groups of Bergen Belsen and Theresienstadt refugees from Switzerland to UNRRA camps was April 15. According to a late cable from Paris, however, it is planned to effect the evacuation of these refugees to Philippeville and southern Italy in two groups and April 30 has been set as the preliminary target date for the first half. Arrangements for their transportation from the Swiss border will be made by military authorities, who are now arranging feeding and shelter accommodations for the refugees while in France. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration has suggested that its Versailles mission offer military authorities supplementary medical and welfare personnel for the care of the refugees en route.

A report from Bern informed us that six of the exchangees from Bergen Belsen who had to be hospitalized in Switzerland have now recovered sufficiently to be able to travel and Representative McClelland will endeavor to include them in the convoy of refugees to go to Philippeville. It is contemplated that the remaining three exchangees who were ill will also be transferred to Philippeville if they are physically able to undertake the journey when the refugees leave Switzerland.

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REPORTS ON SURVIVING JEWS

According to reports of representatives of a private organization the present Jewish population of Budapest is estimated at approximately 150,000, and thousands are reappearing from deportation, labor, and concentration camps. There are 2,000 Jews still in hiding in Bratislava who are being aided by the International Red Cross representative; the food situation there is said to be fairly good. About 1,600 Jews in Zagreb, where the situation in general is described as fairly good, with stocks of clothing and food available, are also being assisted. There remain in Greece some 8,500 Jews, approximately 10% of the pre-war Jewish population of that country. Of this number, 4,500 are in Athens, including some 1,500 Salonika Jews.

SPANISH REPUBLICAN REFUGEES

We recently learned from our Embassy in Lisbon that the situation of Spanish Republican refugees in Portugal has become more precarious. Private agencies have been supporting these refugees in hiding to prevent their arrest by Portuguese police and deportation to imprisonment and possible execution in Spain. In recent weeks, however, the hiding places of a number of them have been discovered, resulting in the arrest and imprisonment of many of them and in increasing danger to the others. In a cable to Ambassador Winant and Mr. Harrison the Board called the attention of the Intergovernmental Committee to the plight of these refugees and strongly recommended that the IGC take over the maintenance of this group as a part of its over-all program on the Iberian Peninsula and that it arrange for the speedy evacuation of the refugees in question to places of safety.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

It was reported by Mr. Harrison, Representative of this Government on the Intergovernmental Committee, that as a result of discussions between the French authorities and the Assistant Director of the IGC, the Committee has been advised by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the French Government, having ratified the Convention signed at Geneva on February 10, 1938, concerning the status of refugees coming from Germany and having decided to adhere to the additional protocol extending the provisions of the Convention to refugees coming from Austria, wishes the Intergovernmental Committee to assume officially within the framework of its general mandate the protection of refugees coming from Germany and Austria. The French Foreign Office further stated that if the Committee accepts

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the official mission, the French Government is prepared to take measures by decree to enable the Committee's representative in France to exercise the same powers for the legal and political protection of German and Austrian refugees as were formerly conferred upon the League High Commissioner in France with respect to the protection of Nansen refugees. Mr. Harrison has been authorized by this Government to vote favorably on acceptance of the proposals of the French Government at the meeting of the Executive Committee called for April 11 to consider the French Government's invitation.

In view of the urgent need for funds to proceed with a number of action programs now in readiness, and as a result of Mr. Harrison's strong recommendation that to avoid further delay this Government contribute to 1945 IGC administrative and operational expenditures in conformity with earlier commitments, appropriate recommendations for this purpose were submitted to the Bureau of the Budget. Mr. Harrison was informed of this action and advised that every effort is being made to secure consideration and final action before the Executive Committee meeting scheduled for April 11.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000658

APR 3 - 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/29/45

00659

APR 3 - 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT: inp 3/29/45

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APR 3 - 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT

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00061

APR 3 - 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT

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00062

APR 3 - 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

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00663

APR 3 - 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

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00064

APR 3 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

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00065

APR 3 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

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00066

APR 3 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/29/45

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONFI[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of March 19 to 24, 1945

EVACUATION AND RELIEF OPERATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

The results of the meeting of the President of the International Red Cross with German officials were reported by Representative McClelland in a cable in which he indicated that Burckhardt's principal achievement was the obtainment of permission for Intercross delegates to be stationed in all major camps, both for Schutzhaeftlinge and for prisoners of war, to exercise personal supervision of relief distributions. Presumably on grounds of military security, since certain numbers of Schutzhaeftlinge are employed in war industries, this permission was conditioned on the delegates remaining in these camps until the end of the war and not traveling back and forth to Switzerland. Willingness on the part of the Germans to permit deliveries of relief of all types by truck or other means of transport to Schutzaeftlinge without regard to nationality or race was indicated, although it was requested that, in view of the difficulties of the food supply situation for the Germans themselves, any such distributions of relief, especially to marching columns along the roads, be discreetly conducted. Appropriate delegates for the camp posts are being selected by Intercross and will be sent into Germany as rapidly as possible.

With respect to the evacuation of Schutzhaeftlinge, final detailed authorization from Berlin as to the specific persons whose evacuation by Intercross will be permitted has not as yet been received, although it was agreed in principle that women, children, elderly and sick people, regardless of religion or race, would be permitted to leave. Apparently there was a general attempt to create the impression that throughout the past years of mass arrests and deportations of civilians to Germany from occupied countries the SS was really only an executive organ and that it would be willing to allow useless Schutzhaeftlinge to leave Germany now that the internal housing and food situation is becoming difficult. No transportation for such evacuations would be furnished by the Germans, and they regarded unfavorably the suggested use by Intercross of parcel ships returning from Lübeck to Goteborg, on the ground that these waters are thickly mined and they do not wish to be held responsible for the sinking of any ships loaded with evacuees. It is the intention of the International Red Cross to utilize for this purpose returning prisoner-of-war relief trucks, although it is an inadequate and difficult method of evacuation, particularly for persons who are ill. The suggestion was made by Burckhardt that the inmates of Ravensbrück, numbering some 30,000 or more women of various

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nationalities, be among the first to be evacuated, both because conditions in that camp are very bad and because of the camp's proximity to the approaching battle front.

It was Representative McClelland's conclusion that the Board can most effectively act to advance this two-fold program by assisting in the procurement of transportation equipment and by organizing arrangements for the evacuation from Switzerland of groups arriving there who are for the time being non-repatriable.

EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

We were advised by Representative Mann that the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration has indicated that it can provide doctors, nurses, and welfare workers to accompany the two groups of Bergen Belsen and Theresienstadt evacuees on the journey from Marseilles to their destination. Inquiry was made, however, as to whether such personnel can be recruited by the Board to accompany the refugees from Switzerland to Marseilles, and the suggestion was made that such personnel should, if possible, accompany the refugees to their destination, where they would be replaced by UNRRA personnel, rather than only to Marseilles.

SUGGESTED MEASURE TO PROTECT DETAINEES

The Intergovernmental Committee representative in Italy has submitted for consideration a proposal suggested by an individual who recently escaped after four and one-half years in German concentration camps. Briefly, the proposed plan envisages an intensive campaign by leaflets and broadcasts to invite German camp guards to procure from persons in their power statements attesting to the humane treatment which they have received, such statements, subject to confirmation after their release by the persons who signed them, to be taken into consideration in trials of war criminals. It was declared by the individual in question that such action might well save large numbers of detainees from ill treatment and death. In support of the plan it was pointed out that it cannot react unfavorably on those whose protection is sought and that favorable psychological conditions would be found in currently lowering German morale.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE

In connection with the consideration now being given to the estimated expenses of the Intergovernmental Committee for the year 1945, our Embassy in London was recently informed by cable that it is the feeling of the War Refugee Board that the estimate of 2,000,000 pounds for operational expenses may be inadequate for the needs which the Committee will have to meet this year. The suggestion was made that the presentation to Congress of a recommendation with respect to the contribution to be made by this Government for such expenses be withheld pending a review of the plans and estimates of the Committee by the newly appointed United States Government representative on the Committee. Information has since been received from the Embassy concerning the suggestion made by the British Foreign Office that the Intergovernmental Committee seek to obtain voluntary contributions from other member governments to finance its operational requirements for 1945. The view was expressed by the Foreign Office that, with the liberation of Europe, the activities of the Committee can be expected to become considerably more extensive, and while it is not the intention of the Government of Great Britain to avoid any obligation, the continued payment of all of the Committee's operational expenditures by the British and United States Governments will create an increasingly inequitable situation. It was pointed out that the undertaking of the two governments at the Bermuda meeting to underwrite jointly the operational expenditures of the Intergovernmental Committee was a temporary measure in order to get the Committee's relief activities under way and that the undertaking accordingly should not become nor be looked upon as a permanent measure. The Embassy was advised by cable of this Government's accord with the British suggestion and of our agreement that the Intergovernmental Committee should request contributions for this year from other member governments.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000070

MAR 27 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/26/45

00071

MAR 27 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/26/45

00072

MAR 27 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/26/45

00073

MAR 27 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT: inp 3/26/45

EBT

000074

MAR 27 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/26/45

00075

MAR 27 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/26/45

00076

MAR 27 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/26/45

000677

MAR 27 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/26/45

00078

MAR 27 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

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Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of March 12 to 17, 1945

EVACUATION AND RELIEF OPERATIONS IN ENEMY TERRITORY FROM SWITZERLAND

Details of the program being developed for providing relief to physically unfit unassimilated detainees in enemy territory and for evacuating such detainees to Switzerland were cabled to Representative Mann in London, who has been ordered to Paris to work out with McClelland and Katzki certain problems incident to the execution of the program.

Representative McClelland recently reported that early this month the International Red Cross was informed by the German Government of its agreement to permit the departure from Germany of certain categories of detainees unsuited for labor, elderly people, women, and children. A report which reached us this week from a private source similarly indicated that Germany has agreed in principle to "repatriate" certain categories of unemployed civilian populations. According to another report, it appears that a group of Bergen Belsen inmates have been transferred to an internment camp at Wurzach near the Swiss border.

Interested groups here have made available in Switzerland the necessary funds to sponsor a program of relief for Luxembourg deportees in Germany in connection with which the International Red Cross recently expressed its willingness to assist.

EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

According to information which the Intergovernmental Committee recently received, the number of Hungarian refugees now in Switzerland is 2,200, including many doctors, lawyers, and nurses. Most of them are said to have adequate financial means of their own, and almost all of them wish to return to Hungary. It is indicated that their repatriation can be effected at an earlier date from Philippeville, since they would otherwise have to remain in Switzerland until such time as a direct route to Hungary is open.

On the basis of information developed in connection with arrangements for the removal from Switzerland of the two groups of evacuees from Bergen Belsen and Theresienstadt,

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it is expected that other parties of refugees who may reach Switzerland will be composed of two distinct groups: first, those who wish to return to their own countries, and second, those who wish to go elsewhere. Accordingly, the Intergovernmental Committee has recommended that, as a matter of practical policy, subject to the agreement of the Swiss Government, the wishes of the individuals concerned as regards repatriation be investigated before decisions are reached with respect to their removal from Switzerland, and that those who wish to be repatriated and whose repatriation would not be expedited by their transfer from that country be allowed to remain in Switzerland.

From a private source we learned that the Czechoslovak Government may be approached with a request that it give a guarantee for the repatriation of over 90 Czechoslovak nationals among the evacuees from Theresienstadt, similar to the guarantee of the Dutch Government with respect to Dutch nationals included in the group.

With respect to the pending evacuation of the 1,672 refugees from Bergen Belsen and 760 of the 1,210 from Theresienstadt, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration has asked to be notified as to the date of their departure from Switzerland as far in advance of the actual evacuation as possible. We cabled this request to Representative McClelland and asked him to obtain and forward data requested by UNRRA as to the composition of the groups with respect to nationality (declared or otherwise) or, if stateless, former nationality; age, sex, and physical condition; and documentation.

We were informed by Representative McClelland that three persons among the recent exchangees who were hospitalized in Switzerland have now recovered sufficiently to travel. He was requested by cable to arrange for the inclusion of these three persons in the evacuation of the two refugee groups, unless their immediate departure for Philippeville can be arranged through private agency facilities in Switzerland.

RESCUE AND RELIEF OPERATIONS FROM SWEDEN

Following Representative Olsen's strong recommendation that arrangements be made to continue the rescue and relief operations in Norway in view of the increasingly critical situation there, the Board is lending every assistance to the

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efforts of the interested private groups to obtain additional funds to finance the program. In the meantime, it is arranging to make Board funds available for immediate needs of the project.

To assist in the proposed expansion of the parcel program for Bergen Belsen detainees by shipments of food, medical, and clothing supplies from Sweden at an aggregate cost of 1,000,000 kronor, the Board, together with other interested government agencies, cabled our Embassy in London requesting urgent approval from the Joint Relief Subcommittee so that procurement and shipment can be begun as soon as possible. We advised Minister Johnson and Representative Olsen of this action and of the arrangement which has been made for financing the program.

LATIN-AMERICAN PASSPORTS

With respect to 147 Ecuadoran passport holders interned at Bergen Belsen, we were advised by our Embassy in Quito that, in view of the agreement of this Government regarding such passports, the Swiss Government, as representative of Ecuadoran interests in Germany, has been requested to designate a Swiss consular officer to extend for one year the validity of the passports in question.

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

00082

MAR 22 1945

MAR 22 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/21/45

EBT

00083

MAR 22 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/21/45

00084

MAR 22 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2,
War Department General Staff,
Room 1-C-774,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT: EBT: inp 3/21/45

000085

MAR 22 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/21/45

00086

MAR 22 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/21/45

000687

MAR 22 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/21/45

00088

MAR 22 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

EBT EBT:inp 3/21/45

00089

MAR 22 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/21/45

00690

MAR 22 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of March 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

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Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of March 5 to 10, 1945

EVACUATION AND RELIEF OPERATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

Plans developed in consultation with other government agencies and international organizations are proceeding toward the implementation of the broad program approved at the Board meeting on February 20 for relief and rescue operations. Representative McClelland has been authorized to obtain from any possible sources the necessary transportation equipment, including trucking facilities, gasoline, tires, oil, etc., to be made available to the International Red Cross to carry relief to physically unfit unassimilated detainees in enemy territory and to evacuate such detainees on return trips to Switzerland. The possibility of also using other trucks, available to Intercross in connection with the delivery of prisoner-of-war relief, for evacuation of such refugees on return trips from Germany is also being explored. A further contribution to the program is the agreement of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to make food supplies available, at the request of the War Refugee Board, to the International Red Cross for the maintenance in Switzerland of refugees who are evacuated from Germany and who are in transit to UNRRA-controlled camps. Representative Katzki, who recently returned from his assignment in Turkey, is expected to proceed to Switzerland shortly to assist Representative McClelland in the execution of this project.

According to a report from Representative McClelland, it was expected that the President of the International Red Cross would meet this week with German officials for conversations and that discussions would include the question of relief to all categories of Schutzhaeftlinge and prisoners of war and clarification of the question of whether or not the permission recently granted Intercross by the Germans for the entry of as many trucks as Intercross wishes for prisoner-of-war relief also includes trucks carrying relief to Schutzhaeftlinge.

We were notified by our Embassy in London that our proposal for the shipment of an additional 300,000 three-kilogram parcels of foodstuffs has been approved by the Relief Sub-committee for Blockade authorization provided the International Red Cross will accept the responsibility for distribution of such parcels and that these consignments do not prejudice distribution and transportation of parcels for prisoners of war.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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Dollar Currency Held by Refugees

The Treasury Department and the Department of State have considered with the Board the problem of the present currency controls as they affect refugees who surrender United States dollar currency upon their entry into Switzerland. In view of and solely because of the humanitarian considerations involved, our Legation in Bern was informed that the Treasury Department is prepared, until further notice, to countenance the purchase by a designated Swiss bank, under specified conditions, of amounts up to $100 per person per month. The Legation was requested to so inform the Swiss unless our Embassy in London, which has been advised of this decision and requested to cable its comments or agreement to Bern, feels that for any reason the proposed procedure is objectionable in any way.

Proposal for Evacuation of Dutch Jews

We were recently advised of a proposal which has been submitted to the Dutch Government involving the evacuation to Switzerland of 1,500 Dutch Jews now held in German camps at Theresienstadt and Bergen Belsen. The views of the British and United States Governments having been requested concerning certain aspects of the proposal, a cable was sent to the Embassy in London informing it of this Government's approval of the continuation of the negotiations under the conditions and provisions suggested by the Embassy and MEW.

CONDITIONS IN GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

In response to our recent inquiry as to whether Schutzhaeftlinge include persons actively engaged in labor in Germany, Representative McClelland advised us that the best information available indicates that most Schutzhaeftlinge who are capable of physical labor are employed by the Nazis at tasks of varying importance to Germany's war effort, although no statistics are available as to the numbers actually engaged in essential "war work" such as the manufacture of munitions or war material. It is known, however, that large numbers of Schutzhaeftlinge literally have been made slaves for the performance of such heavy physical labor as building roads, clearing debris, and digging anti-tank ditches. At Ravensbrück, the women work at reconditioning used clothing shipped from extermination camps in Poland. Jewish deportees at Theresienstadt sew Germany army uniforms and make heavy wooden cases for machinery, etc., according to reports of evacuees from that camp who recently arrived in Switzerland. Many Schutzhaeftlinge who were evacuated by the Germans from camps in the east are now inactive in terribly crowded assembly camps.

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The categories of Schutzhaeftlinge to whom International Red Cross relief parcels may be sent comprise Jews of various nationalities. McClelland reported that present plans of Intercross are to deliver parcels, insofar as is practically possible, only to those who are ill and exhausted.

According to a report which reached us from a private source, there are now a large number of prisoners of war at Theresienstadt.

EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

Representative McClelland informed appropriate military authorities that the refugees to be removed from Swiss territory at this time include the entire group of 1,672 Hungarian Jewish evacuees from Bergen Belsen and all of the group of 1,210 evacuees from Theresienstadt except some 440 who are of Dutch nationality and who it is indicated are to remain temporarily in Switzerland pending the decision of the Dutch Government with respect to their ultimate destination. In view of the readiness of the Swiss to furnish trains to carry the refugees to a French port of embarkation, their removal from Switzerland can take place as soon as maritime transport is available.

In this connection, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration furnished the Board with information concerning available and potential facilities for the reception and care of refugees and outlined suggestions for improving notification and processing procedures.

REPORT FROM HUNGARY

Minister Johnson sent us a summary of a newspaper account of Swedish rescue and relief activities in Hungary given by a Hungarian Jew who recently escaped to Sweden. Tribute was paid to Special Attache Wallenberg, whose courageous and tireless efforts in behalf of Jews were vividly described. Demonstrating the zeal and disregard of his own personal safety which characterized Wallenberg's pursuit of these activities, it was related that in one instance he defied an armed patrol, which had entered an area where some 5,000 Jews were quartered in so-called Swedish houses to remove some of them to labor camps, by informing them that they were trespassing upon Swedish territory, that they could not trespass further without first shooting him, and that

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none of the inhabitants of the area should leave as long as he lived. In another instance, when he was informed that 11 persons holding Swedish passports had been arrested by the Gestapo and loaded on a Vienna-bound labor train, he arrived at the station after the train had departed and followed it until it stopped at a station just short of the German border, where he managed to remove the 11 persons.

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000095

THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO HIS HOLINESS THE POPE

Rome, Italy, March 22, 1945.

Dear General O'Dwyer,

Thank you for your letter of March 8, 1945 with the enclosed confidential report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945, which I read with much interest.

Sincerely yours,

Myron C. Taylor

General William O'Dwyer,
Executive Director
War Refugee Board,
Washington, D.C.

000696

MAR 10 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/9/45

000697

MAR 10 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/9/45

EBT

00098

MAR 10 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/9/45

00099

MAR 10 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/9/45

EBT

000700

MAR 10 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/9/45

EBT

000701

MAR 10 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/9/45

000702

MAR 10 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/9/45

000703

MAR 10 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/9/45

EBT

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MAR 10 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 26 to March 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/9/45

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONF[redacted]

**Report of the War Refugee Board**
**for the Week of February 26 to March 3, 1945**

**SITUATION IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS--DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF PARCELS**

Representative McClelland reported that a written request was submitted to the President of the International Red Cross urging that visits of its delegates to places of detention of all categories of "Shutzhaeftlinge" be increased to the greatest possible extent, that the number of its representatives in Germany be augmented as substantially and as rapidly as possible, and that its delegates be instructed to take every advantage of the mounting confusion within Germany in order to mitigate the lot of all civilian detainees and to dissuade German officials from last minute extremes.

As an indication of the present situation, the reply from Intercross stressed that the German Government has recently informed it in writing that "for imperative reasons of national defense, visits to camps and places of detention where alien detainees (Shutzhaeftlinge) are confined are unfortunately at the present moment not feasible." It was stated that the International Red Cross delegate in Berlin recently reported being informed by headquarters of the Germany security police that permission to visit concentration camps of alien detainees must in each particular instance be secured from Himmler personally.

Five new delegates of Intercross were expected to leave for Germany within a few days, and others are to be sent as soon as it can be arranged. From a practical view, it was pointed out that the question of transportation is and will continue to be the decisive problem, that access to camps by Intercross delegates is dependent upon whether they bring something with them and whether they have gas and can still manage to travel on the roads (by truck), and that any number of freight cars made available to Intercross may be, and probably will be, found useless as a result of aerial bombardments of rail lines. The President of Intercross indicated his awareness of the urgency of the problem, stating that under the present circumstances thousands of prisoners and detainees can starve within four days and that not a moment is to be wasted. He expressed the view that by force of will and nerve Intercross can do something to preserve the lives of these people if furnished with certain indispensable means for execution of the task, and that any results to be secured must be through large-scale methods of action and sweeping decisions.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

000706

Representative McClelland recently discussed with the chief Intercross delegate from Berlin the current situation of Shutzhaeftlings and Jewish deportees in Germany. From information which he obtained during this discussion, it appears that the Germans are evacuating the inmates of concentration camps and regrouping them in two general areas, one with headquarters at the concentration camp of Neuengamme near Hamburg, the other with headquarters at the Dachau camp near Munich. The Intercross delegate reported that conditions of frightful overcrowding already exist in Neuengamme and Dachau, where the internees arrive in a state of utter exhaustion after days of traveling on foot. Almost all of them are in a very poor physical condition because of prolonged undernourishment and mistreatment, and a great many have died as a result of the evacuation measures. He also emphasized the urgent need of transportation equipment, expressing the conviction that invaluable aid could be given to thousands of these persons if trucks were available. It was his opinion that, in view of the general state of confusion and the recently demonstrated willingness of SS officials to cooperate with Intercross, no difficulty will be encountered regarding permission to distribute relief parcels on the spot in assembly camps.

Representative McClelland advanced the suggestion that deliveries might be made to the Hamburg region from War Refugee Board stocks of some 220,000 parcels at Gothenburg and renewed his recommendation that arrangements be made to provide trucks for delivery of parcels from Switzerland to the Munich area to relieve the critical situation there.

We cabled our Embassy in London recommending that, in view of the extreme urgency of extending additional aid to unassimilated persons in enemy-controlled concentration camps and in view of recent reports from the International Red Cross that more widespread distribution can be effectuated under the terms of the existing agreement, an additional 300,000 packages of three kilograms each of foodstuffs be shipped from this country by the War Refugee Board for distribution by the International Red Cross. The Embassy was requested to refer the matter urgently to the Relief Sub-Committee for Blockade authorization to proceed with the program at the earliest possible date.

000707

NORWEGIAN OPERATIONS

Our Legation in Stockholm cabled a report of the rescue and relief operations conducted in Norway from Sweden under the supervision of the Board during January. Through licensed and other channels, 35,000 kilograms of food, 2,200 kilograms of clothing, 1,460 pairs of shoes, and a considerable quantity of additional clothing and other articles were sent into Norway. In the same period, an estimated 1,100 refugees were brought to Sweden over the evacuation routes established in connection with these operations. Representative Olsen strongly recommended that arrangements be made to continue these operations in view of the increasingly critical situation in Norway with more and more persons being forced into hiding because they are hunted by the Gestapo.

EVACUATIONS FROM YUGOSLAVIA

Ambassador Kirk cabled us from Italy of the arrival at Bari on February 28 of 101 Jewish refugees who had been evacuated from Topusko. The physical condition of the remainder of the group of 107 whose evacuation was recommended was such that they could not be removed. These few are now in the Split area where they are receiving proper attention.

LATIN-AMERICAN PASSPORT HOLDERS DEPORTED FROM VITTEL

Our Embassy in Madrid reported that, following submission of additional information concerning the whereabouts of persons removed from the internment camp at Vittel, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has advised it of the transmission of the data in question to the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin with an indication of the interest of the Spanish Government in this matter.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

008708

MAR 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/7/45

000709

MAR 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/7/45

008710

MAR 8 - 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/7/45

000711

MAR 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/7/45

000712

MAR 8 - 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 3/7/45

000713

MAR 8 - 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/7/45

000714

MAR 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/7/45

000715

MAR 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBT:inp 3/7/45

00071b

MAR 8 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 19 to 24, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 3/7/45

0007117

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONF[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of February 19 to 24, 1945

PROSPECTIVE EVACUATIONS FROM AND RELIEF OPERATIONS IN GERMAN-CONTROLLED AREAS

At a meeting of the members of the Board this week the situation which is believed to prevail in enemy territory was outlined and the action which it is felt the Board should take under existing circumstances was indicated. It was set forth that the best information available to us indicates that, while the Germans apparently have abandoned wholesale exterminations of detainees, large numbers of the physically unfit are now in imminent danger of death from starvation, exposure, and deliberate neglect. It seems clear that, if their lives are to be saved, food, clothing, and medicines must reach them at once, and, if possible, they should be removed to a place of safety without unnecessary delay. The only means of direct contact with concentration and internment camps is through the International Red Cross, and operations can best be conducted through Switzerland. Approval was given to the proposals made for obtaining the necessary cooperation of the International Red Cross and of the Swiss Government and for obtaining the necessary food, medicines, and transportation equipment.

The two-fold program approved envisages (1) the furnishing of food and other relief through the International Red Cross to physically unfit unassimilated detainees who are within enemy-controlled territory, and (2) their removal by the International Red Cross to safety in Switzerland as soon as possible.

Representative McClelland was advised of the foregoing by cable and was requested to explore the availability in Switzerland of food and other relief supplies as well as transportation equipment and to advise us at once whether relief trucks are permitted to move from Switzerland to German-controlled areas and return to Switzerland for reloading of supplies. He was further requested to seek the consent of the International Red Cross to deliver the relief supplies in enemy territory and to organize and effectuate the removal of detainees to Switzerland; and, with the concurrence of appropriate officials of this Government, to approach the Swiss Government for the purpose of obtaining its consent to make available to Intercross now the necessary supplies and equipment for this relief and evacuation program against our assurance

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

000718

of replenishment or compensation at a later time, and to admit all detainees who reach Swiss borders and to house and maintain them until we are able to arrange for their evacuation to Allied territory.

In connection with indications that distribution of relief parcels may be officially permitted to certain categories of Shutzhaeftlinge in concentration camps, we requested McClelland to advise us whether Shutzhaeftlinge include persons actively engaged in labor in Germany and whether the categories to which Intercross parcels will be sent comprise or exclude Jews.

In reply to his inquiry concerning reports that additional transports of refugees may follow the 1,210 who recently reached Switzerland from Theresienstadt, a cable was sent to the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, suggesting that the IGC representative in Switzerland obtain detailed information from Representative McClelland in Bern and discuss with him the various problems involved.

It is our information that the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration can arrange accommodations at the camp at Philippeville for from 7,000 to 8,000 refugees by using tents in addition to the existing barracks, which can accommodate from 2,000 to 3,000. Medical facilities are available for 600 patients and can be doubled in case of an emergency. Plans have already been made by UNRRA for sheltering and maintaining 2,500 refugees at this camp.

According to a report from Stockholm, there appears to be a possibility that some 2,000 Jews may be released for removal to Sweden from concentration camps in Germany.

EVACUATIONS FROM SWITZERLAND

We were advised by the War Department that exchanges of messages indicate that plans are progressing favorably on the movement from Switzerland of the 1,672 Hungarian Jewish evacuees from Bergen Belsen. McClelland relayed to us information received from the British Legation in Bern that the British Foreign Office has agreed that the entire group should be removed from Switzerland as soon as possible and has suggested that their claims to admissibility to Palestine can be properly investigated after their arrival at Philippeville.

000719

REPORTS ON GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

A report which reached us from a private source through our Legation at Bern carried information furnished by persons in the group of 1,210 refugees who recently arrived in Switzerland from Theresienstadt. It was indicated that some 13,000 Jews remain at Theresienstadt, and that 10,000 of them are old internees and 3,000 are newcomers. About 2,000 of the latter are said to be Christians of Jewish descent and "mischling" and include some 600 Slovakian Jewish women recently transferred to Theresienstadt from Sered. It was reported that 5,000 persons left Theresienstadt in September apparently for labor in the Reich, and that 18,000 more departed in October, ostensibly for the same purpose. Two escapees from Birkenau stated that these 18,000 were first sent to that camp and subsequently transferred into Germany. Conditions on the whole at Theresienstadt were described as hard. Internees are required to work 15 hours per day, and, although individual parcels from Sweden arrive satisfactorily, many of the elderly persons are dying from malnutrition.

A further report was received from our Embassy in Moscow concerning conditions at Oswiecim (Auschwitz). According to a report which the Polish Information Service received from a Polish correspondent, the Germans began to evacuate prisoners from the camp on February 22, 1944, at which time there were 160,000 persons imprisoned there. By January 1, 1945, only 60,000 remained, and the final liquidation began on January 18. The prisoners who were at that time unable to walk were shot, and on January 21 just 6,000 remained who were saved only by the Red Army's rapid advance. The inmates included women, children, and old men from Warsaw in addition to citizens of all European nations. Barracks were provided for the mentally ill. According to statements of prisoners, the Germans murdered 4,000,000 persons of 28 nationalities at the camp, which covered an area of more than 50 square kilometers. Prison labor was employed in the gasoline and synthetic rubber plants and German Farben Industrie factories in the area. No wages were paid, and workers who became exhausted were cremated. The report of the Polish correspondent described the systems of torture used on the prisoners. At Brzezinski (Birkenau), a short distance from Oswiecim, only 4,500 prisoners were found by the Red Army, among them 900 men, 200 old women, and 500 orphans deported from Warsaw following the uprising there. The number of women at Brzezinski on January 21 was 983.

000720

RELIEF PARCELS

Minister Johnson reported that, under the program of a private organization in Sweden, 11,000 parcels have been sent to Theresienstadt, 7,000 to Bergen Belsen, and 2,000 to other camps. These 20,000 parcels contained 50,000 kilograms of food. Arrival of packages is confirmed by wires from persons in Switzerland who were recently freed from these camps and who stress the vital importance of food parcels.

A private organization in this country informed the Board that its representative in Switzerland is in a position to purchase certain foodstuff in Switzerland for consignment to Intercross for distribution to unassimilated Jewish internees at Bergen Belsen provided the assurance required by Swiss authorities can be given that a corresponding amount of similar foodstuff will be available for import. Our Legation in Bern was informed by cable that there is no objection to giving the assurance requested provided United States Government officials in Switzerland concur.

McClelland reported that the International Red Cross has indicated its willingness to assist in a proposed program of a private organization for sending relief parcels to Luxembourg deportees in Germany.

REPORTS ON HUNGARIAN AND RUMANIAN JEWS

According to reliable reports received from private sources, 114,000 Jews survived in Budapest, there are an estimated 12,700 Hungarian Jews in Rumania, and between 4,000 and 5,000 in Northern Transylvania. Of those in Rumania, 1,500 escaped deportation from Hungary and crossed the Rumanian border clandestinely after June 1944; 3,200 were forced laborers who were liberated from the copper mines at Bor, Yugoslavia, and were permitted by Rumanian authorities to cross the frontier in September and October 1944; the remaining 8,000 were members of forced labor battalions in Hungary freed by the advance of the Russo-Rumanian forces. Those in Northern Transylvania were also recently liberated from forced labor columns by the Russo-Rumanian offensive.

Statistics were also received indicating the disposition of the present Rumanian Jewish population of 285,000 and showing an estimated 17,159 and 6,000 surviving in Bukovina and Northern Transylvania, respectively, where there were formerly 129,000 and 150,000.

William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000721

MAR 1 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

EBT

000722

MAR 1 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

000723

MAR 1 - 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

000724

MAR 1 - 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 2/28/45

000725

MAR 1 - 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

EBT

000726

MAR 1 - 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBT:inp 2/28/45

000727

MAR 1 - 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

000728

MAR 1 - 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

EBT

000729

MAR 1 - 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 12 to 17, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT:inp 2/28/45

000730

DUPLICATE ORIGI L

CONF[redacted]

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of February 12 to 17, 1945

PROSPECTIVE EVACUATIONS TO SWITZERLAND FROM GERMAN-CONTROLLED TERRITORY

Reports reaching us indicate that there is a growing conviction in responsible quarters that a progressive increase is to be expected in the number of Jewish refugees released from Germany and German-controlled areas. Practical factors pointing to this conclusion include the difficulties anticipated for the Germans as a result of a reported lack of food for Jewish internees and the probable need of Jewish internment camps for housing German refugees from Soviet-occupied areas. On the theoretical side, expression has been given to the possible existence of a desire on the part of German officials to gain credit for releasing Jewish internees, as well as a wish to avoid embarrassment to the local population which might result from the presence of Jewish internment camps in Germany proper where incriminating evidence of any mass exterminations might remain.

In view of intimations that additional transports are to follow the recently arrived group of 1,210 refugees from Theresienstadt, the Board requested Representative McClelland by cable to advise us whether in his judgment there appears to be an imminent possibility that German authorities, under the pressure of growing overcrowding in Germany resulting from the flow of refugees from the east, may present increasing numbers of refugees at the Swiss border for admission. While it is assumed that, if such arrivals take place in an orderly manner and not in too great numbers at one time, the Swiss Government may be willing to accept them, both supplies and assistance in removing corresponding numbers of refugees already there may be requested by the Swiss if the flow becomes substantial. We accordingly suggested to McClelland the desirability of initiating appropriate discussions with a view to determining and organizing the action to be taken in the event that the indicated

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By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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possibilities materialize.

EVACUEES FROM THERESIENSTADT AND BERGEN BELSEN

In order that appropriate arrangements might be made for their transportation and for their reception and maintenance at Philippeville or other suitable camps, we notified the War Department and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration of the arrival in Switzerland of the group of 1,210 refugees from Theresienstadt and of the urgency for their removal from Swiss territory. Representative McClelland was advised of this action. According to information from a private source, the Dutch Jews in this group are receiving assistance from their government and the German, French, and Polish refugees are being cared for temporarily by Swiss authorities.

Concerning the group of 1,672 refugees from Bergen Belsen, we were informed that military authorities are in communication with Representative McClelland with regard to the details of arrangements for their evacuation from Switzerland.

A report from a private source indicated that, of the stateless persons and individuals holding Latin-American documents from Bergen Belsen who were included in the exchange recently effected in Switzerland, 141 are being sent to Philippeville and 11 are hospitalized in Switzerland.

COOPERATION OF SWISS AND SWEDISH GOVERNMENTS

As indicated in their replies to our suggestions that frequent and extended visits of consular officials to places where Jews are concentrated be made as a part of intensified measures in behalf of Jews and other internees surviving in German territory, it is apparently the impression of the Swiss and Swedish Governments that we were requesting renewed intercessions, the positive effect of which they regard as extremely questionable. Accordingly, we cabled our Legations in Bern and Stockholm and Representatives McClelland and Olsen asking that it be explained that

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our request was made to secure the indirect influence which might be exercised by the presence of Swiss and Swedish consular officials near localities where Jews are concentrated and by such informal conversations which they could hold in those places rather than official acts of intercession.

CONDITIONS IN GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS--DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF PARCELS

There is evidence that large numbers of Schutzhaeftlinge (a term apparently applied to designate persons detained for security reasons) are being transferred by the Germans from the east and the north, and it is believed that a great many of them are being taken to a point near Munich which seems to be a distribution center from which prisoners are routed to labor camps. While central German authorities have hitherto categorically refused permission for the International Red Cross to distribute relief parcels and the reception of Intercross parcels by internees has been tolerated only in a small number of camps, present indications are that the SS may officially permit the distribution of relief parcels to certain categories of Schutzhaeftlinge in concentration camps. Although the motivation of the more liberal attitude is not clear, it is felt that it offers an excellent opportunity for sending into Germany additional Intercross personnel whose presence might serve as an invaluable protection for the lives of thousands of men and women as the Nazi system collapses. In order that full advantage may be taken of the promise suggested in this situation, Representative McClelland is exploring with Intercross the possibilities which may be thus afforded.

Our Embassy in Moscow relayed to us information obtained by an American news correspondent concerning the recently liberated Oswiecim (Auschwitz) death camp. It was reported that approximately 4,000 prisoners, exhausted from suffering, overwork, and hunger, were freed from the camp and that there were Czech, Yugoslav, Dutch, French, and Belgian nationals among them. Arrangements were immediately undertaken by the Polish Provisional Government for shipments of urgently needed medical and food supplies to alleviate their condition.

000733

The Swiss Legation at Berlin reported that, according to information supplied by persons who had witnessed the fate of Jews interned in camps in Upper Silesia, an attempt was made to evacuate the internees from Auschwitz on foot under deplorable conditions. Representative McClelland advised us that he had received from other sources confirmation of the fact that the greater part of the internees remaining in Auschwitz were evacuated on foot before the Soviet advance. Unconfirmed reports in Switzerland indicated that only 2,000 to 3,000 persons were found in Auschwitz at the time of the Russian occupation.

A cable was received from our Embassy in London advising that the Ministry of Economic Warfare had approved a proposed program for shipments of clothing parcels through the International Red Cross to Bergen Belsen, provided that reasonable assurances can be given that parcels will reach addressees and that results of food parcel shipments to Bergen Belsen were satisfactory.

JEWISH REFUGEES IN SWEDEN

According to statistics sent to us by Minister Johnson, there are 5,508 "German refugees" registered with the Swedish Department of Social Welfare. All of these may be assumed to be stateless persons, and it is estimated that about 2,500 of them are Jewish. Of the estimated total of 11,916 Jewish refugees in Sweden, the others include 115 Czechs, 70 Poles, 750 Norwegians, 6,000 Danes, 8 Finns, and 673 stateless persons, of whom 350 are from Norway, 200 from Denmark, and 123 from Finland. Of the total, 50% live in and around Stockholm; the location of the others was not indicated.

EVACUATIONS THROUGH TURKEY

A report received from Turkey brought the information that six Jewish refugees, three of Italian nationality and three of Turkish, had succeeded in escaping from the German-occupied Island of Rhodes and in landing at Marmaris, Turkey. Palestine certificates for them have been requested. These refugees reported that, of the

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3,000 Jews who formerly lived on Rhodes, only 14 remained besides themselves, all of the others having been deported, presumably to Poland. That the 20 survivors escaped deportation was attributed to their Turkish or Italian nationality.

REPORTS FROM TURKEY

From Istanbul, it was learned that a Jewish refugee who recently reached Sofia from Albania reported that there are in Albania at present 350 Jews, most of whom are Yugoslavs, Greeks, and Italians. Jewish refugees arriving in Bucharest from Transylvania stated that Transylvanian Jews were deported to Oranienburg and Wienerneustadt as well as to Auschwitz, with most of the Jews of Solnoc and Miskolcz confined at Wienerneustadt. Absence of communications with these deportees makes it impossible to determine their present situation, and the only facts known are that they were divided into three groups: (a) men between 15 and 50, (b) women between 15 and 50, and (c) children, elderly people, the physically disabled, and mothers who refused to be separated from their children. It was reported that the first two groups were sent to labor camps, while the third group was gassed.

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000735

FEB 21 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000736

FEB 21 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000737

FEB 20 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000738

FEB 21 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

EBT

000739

FEB 21 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000740

FEB 21 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000741

FEB 21 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000742

FEB 21 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000743

FEB 21 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of February 5 to 10, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/19/45

000744

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

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Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of February 5 to 10, 1945

REFUGEES FROM GERMAN TERRITORY ARRIVE IN SWITZERLAND

Representative McClelland confirmed a report, which reached us from a private source, of the arrival in Switzerland of 1,210 refugees from German-held territory. The liberation of this group of Jewish civilian internees, who are said to come from the concentration camp at Theresienstadt, resulted from the efforts of a former Swiss Federal Councillor. Representative McClelland arranged with the Swiss Federal Police for entry permission and preliminary reception and housing preparations for the group.

This convoy, which arrived in Switzerland on February 7, is composed largely of adults, with approximately an equal number of men and women, the number of children under twelve years of age included being only about 58. McClelland advised us that according to preliminary reports these refugees, only a few of whom are slightly ill, seem to be in fairly satisfactory physical condition in contrast to the recently arrived exchangees from Bergen Belsen. Aside from a report that from 500 to 600 Dutch Jews are among them, no details were available regarding the composition of the group as to nationalities, documentation, etc. It is expected that McClelland will be able to give us further information as soon as the Legation has received the list of the refugees which the Swiss police are to furnish.

There are indications that additional convoys of Jewish refugees from Germany and German-held areas may follow at periodic intervals, the military situation and transportation facilities permitting. Accordingly, the Swiss inquired as to whether the assurances given by this Government with respect to the evacuation from Swiss territory of Jewish refugees from Hungary to Allied regions would be applicable to a group from Germany such as this one. We immediately cabled McClelland that our assurances are not limited to refugees coming from any specific enemy or enemy-controlled territory.

The release of some 540 French men and women and a few Swiss nationals said to have been imprisoned by the Germans on espionage charges was also reported and is apparently linked with the efforts which brought about the release of the group of 1,210 Jews. The French group, who are believed to be

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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political prisoners, arrived at the Swiss border on February 7 en route to France, and four of the Swiss nationals have already arrived in Switzerland.

EXCHANGED LATIN-AMERICAN PASSPORT HOLDERS

We received a cable from Marseilles advising us that the number of persons in the group of exchangees from Bergen Belsen who are to be sent to Philippeville is between 150 and 160.

EVACUEES FROM BERGEN BELSEN

Representative Mann advised us that he has taken up with the British the question of the possible admission to Palestine of all or a part of the group of 1,672 evacuees from Bergen Belsen who are being removed from Swiss territory. The Foreign Office indicated that it will be able to reply as soon as it has received a full report which it has requested from the British Minister at Bern.

SITUATION IN GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

From our Legation in Dublin, we learned that the Irish Charge d'Affaires conveyed to the Germans our message indicating our expectations that Jewish and other civilian internees in German concentration, detention, and forced labor camps will be kept alive by the Germans in accordance with their statement that rumors of their intention to exterminate them are without foundation. He was informed that the inmates of the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau have been evacuated to points in the interior.

Reports from Russia

Our Embassy in Moscow cabled us the substance of reports which have appeared in the Russian press since the capture of Oswiecim (Auschwitz) by Soviet troops. According to the statement of a former Russian inmate, quoted in an official communique of January 31, the number of prisoners in this camp varied between 15,000 and 30,000. His statement confirmed reports from other sources that invalids and men and women who were unable to work were killed by gas and their bodies burned in special furnaces. He reported that those who were fit for labor were forced to work in mines and prisoners who grew weak from hunger, heavy labor, and beatings were killed by the Germans.

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An article by a war front correspondent described in detail the arrangements and organization for mass extermina-tions and told of reports by local inhabitants that five to eight trains manned by special crews and loaded to capacity arrived at the camp daily during 1941, 1942, and the early part of 1943 from the occupied areas of Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and France, and that no train was ever seen to return carrying passengers. Apparent-ly as a result of the disclosure of the findings at the Majdanek camp near Lublin, the Germans were said to have dismantled many of their installations at Oswiecim during the past year in an effort to remove evidence of their crimes at this camp. The correspondent reported that he had seen thousands of tortured inmates of the camp who were saved by the Red Army's rapid advance and described them as people whose age it was impossible to guess and who were so exhausted that "they swayed like shadows in the wind." The number of Jews among these survivors was not indicated.

An American correspondent reported after a visit to Lodz that he was informed that only 829 of a pre-war population of 250,000 Jews survived there.

COOPERATION OF SWISS AND SWEDISH GOVERNMENTS

As a result of the approach made by Representative McClelland in accordance with our request that the Swiss be asked to under-take intensified efforts to keep the surviving victims of Nazi persecution alive during the coming stages of hostilities in Europe, our Legation was advised by the Division of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Federal Political Department that the protective value of frequent visits by Swiss consular officials to places where Jews are concentrated is being studied by the Swiss Legation at Berlin with a view to determining the lines along which action can most profitably be taken. The Swiss emphasized, however, that the situation is not the same as it was in Hungary, since Swiss inter-cession in favor of Jews in Germany has up to now been countenanced only with respect to limited categories of beneficiaries of Palestine certificates, United States immigration visas, and Latin-American protective documents insofar as such persons were being considered for exchanges.

Swiss officials were informed that a new appeal by the Swiss Government to the German Government to refrain from further extermination and persecution of the Jews remaining in German-occupied territory would be welcomed by this Government. The Swiss advised our Legation that they have contacted their Legation at Berlin to examine the means of taking action

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along the desired lines.

In response to a similar request for intensified efforts on the part of the Swedish Government in behalf of surviving Jews and other victims of Nazi persecution in German-held territory, Swedish officials were skeptical that the Germans would be receptive to Swedish suggestions in this matter. The Board's views were transmitted by the Foreign Office to the Swedish Minister in Berlin, who expressed the opinion that under present conditions an approach to the German Government by Sweden alone would have completely negative results. He reported that German authorities are entertaining no requests by Swedes or others for permission to visit Jewish concentration camps and suggested that some action might possibly be taken by the International Red Cross, which he believed to be the only possible body that could be employed for this purpose. Minister Johnson was assured that the Swedish Government is keenly aware of the dangers and all their implications and that it is exploring every possibility for useful action.

PROPOSED EVACUATION OF HUNGARIAN JEWS FROM AUSTRIA

According to trustworthy information, some 17,000 Jews deported from Hungary in June 1944 are at present in various types of camps under German authorities on former Austrian territory. Bearing in mind the energetic and generous efforts of the Government of Switzerland to arrange for the exit from Hungary to temporary asylum in Switzerland of some 12,000 Jewish holders of Palestine certificates and Swedish protective documents whose departure German and Hungarian authorities had consented to in October 1944 and whose evacuation was prevented by developments in the military situation, our Legation in Bern asked the Swiss Government whether it would be willing to renew its approaches to the German Government in behalf of Hungarian Jewish deportees in Austria. Inquiry was made as to whether the Government of Switzerland would consider it feasible to request the German Government to permit the departure of an equal or a larger number of Jewish refugees of Hungarian or other nationality now located on former Austrian territory, it being suggested that such representations, if limited to those categories of deportees which the Germans are not using as labor, specifically, elderly persons, women, and children, they might have a greater chance of success. Renewed assurances were given that all such Jewish refugees admitted to Switzerland will be evacuated as soon as possible and that expenses incurred for their maintenance in Switzerland will be reimbursed. The Swiss Federal Political Department replied that it is devoting to this question the attention it deserves and in agreement with the Swiss Legation at Berlin will carefully examine

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what representations could be undertaken for this purpose.

EVACUATIONS FROM NORWAY TO SWEDEN

A report was received from our Legation in Stockholm concerning rescue and relief operations in Norway conducted from Sweden during December 1944. Six vessels are now engaged in evacuations by sea routes, and over 600 refugees were transported to Sweden during the first three weeks of December. Shipments aggregating 28,000 kilograms of foodstuffs, 2,700 kilograms of clothing, and 770 pairs of shoes were made through licensed and other channels during the month.

JEWISH REFUGEES IN SHANGHAI

A private organization in this country has asked its representative in Stockholm to request the Swedish Government to grant Swedish passports to a number of refugee rabbinical scholars in Shanghai whose evacuation it is seeking to effect. We cabled this information to Minister Johnson and Representative Olsen and advised them that it is our understanding that the organization contemplates evacuating the rabbinical group by exchange against Japanese civilians in a Western Hemisphere country other than the United States or by overland evacuation through Russia to neutral territory, pending arrangements for a permanent destination, without reciprocal benefits for Japan. We have been informed that the first method involves negotiations through the Vatican and complicated shipping and technical arrangements and that, with regard to the second method, it is reported by the Vatican that there is no indication of Japanese consent to unilateral removal of this group.

JEWISH REFUGEES IN YUGOSLAVIA

On the basis of a report by an individual who recently arrived in Italy from Topusko, Ambassador Kirk cabled us that there are 107 foreign Jewish refugees there who should be evacuated as soon as possible, although severe winter weather prevents their removal at present. They were said to be well fed and clothed, although a group of more than 1,000 Jews of Yugoslavian nationality are living there under difficult conditions.

SITUATION OF SLOVAKIAN JEWS

Representative McClelland relayed to us information furnished by the International Red Cross that thirteen Jews claiming American nationality were transferred from Marianka to the camp at Bergen Belsen in spite of the intervention of the Intercross delegate at Bratislava with the Slovakian Ministry

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of Foreign Affairs. Four of these persons had previously been removed to Sered and then brought back to Marianka. They reported that they had not been violently treated either on the journey or at Sered and that the food which they received was satisfactory, but they were not able to give any information concerning the remainder of the group of 164 claimants to North or South American nationality, who were segregated pending their deportation.

According to the report of the Bratislava delegate of Intercross, about the only way Slovakian Jews can escape the measures taken against them is to find a safe hiding place, which is very often in a cellar or in the ruins of a bombed house. It is difficult to assist those in hiding, but the delegate is making every effort to find suitable intermediaries for getting needed funds and supplies to them.

Our Legation in Bern cabled that our message protesting the destruction by the Germans of identity documents held by interned Slovakian Jews has been delivered to the Swiss Foreign Office for communication to appropriate German authorities. However, since neither the Legation nor Representative McClelland has a list of the document holders who were at Marianka, they were not able to inform the Swiss as to the names of the persons involved. Although the Intercross delegate at Bratislava did not arrive in Slovakia until after the deportation of most of the Marianka group, McClelland is nevertheless endeavoring to obtain the desired list from him.

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000750

FEB 16 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000751

FEB 16 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000752

FEB 14 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000753

FEB 14 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 28 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000754

FEB 14 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000755

FEB 14 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000756

FEB 14 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Sincerely,

H Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

EBT

000757

FEB 14 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000758

FEB 14 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 29 to February 3, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/12/45

000759

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of January 29 to February 3, 1945

EXCHANGE OF LATIN-AMERICAN PASSPORT HOLDERS

A short while before the arrival of the individuals involved in the current exchange taking place in Switzerland, the Board received information that the group included a number of Jews from Bergen Belsen in possession of Latin-American documents. The number, originally reported at 50 to 75 and more recently indicated to be about 150, apparently includes 67 Dutch and German nationals. It is not clear whether all or a part of this group hold "ad hoc" documents which do not entitle them to admission to the countries in whose names the documents were issued. In accordance with the commitments undertaken by the Board with respect to the bearers of such documentation, arrangements have been made for representatives of a private organization to lend financial and technical assistance to provide for the maintenance and onward transportation of these passport holders, and military authorities and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration have been appropriately informed. Advice of the arrival of the exchangees in Switzerland was received this week, and it is anticipated that the bearers of the documents in question will be taken from Marseilles to Philippeville pending arrangements for their ultimate disposition.

SITUATION IN GERMAN-CONTROLLED AREAS

Representative McClelland reported that, in connection with our request that the Swiss endeavor to make frequent or extended visits to localities where Jews are concentrated, the Swiss Foreign Office informed him that official Swiss representatives have thus far not been able to visit camps at Vienna or Theresienstadt. It was felt that the possibility of their being able to do so is doubtful unless it can be satisfactorily established that there are persons in the camps who are legally entitled to the protection of the Swiss, but they assured McClelland that they will make every attempt to visit these camps. The camps near Vienna were regarded by the Swiss as likely to offer the most favorable prospects, since there are numerous Swiss interests in the vicinity, and they will seek to take complete advantage of that fact for the purposes indicated.

During an interview along the same lines with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, McClelland was assured that Intercross expects to continue to do all in its power to aid in every possible way Jews and other sur-

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viving victims of Nazi persecution still in the hands of the Germans. To that end, Intercross is endeavoring to enlarge the number of its delegates in Germany. McClelland urged that this effort be continued on the premise that the more competent and energetic men there are present as internal confusion increases in Germany, the greater will be the chances of influencing German officials and possibly of dissuading them from carrying out extermination policies. In this connection, McClelland indicated that Intercross is expected to report shortly on the extent of the supervision which it has been able to exercise over Hungarian Jewish deportees working in territory of the Reich. This supervision was said to have been fairly satisfactory in Austria, especially in the last six weeks, but it was believed to be less extensive in Germany proper.

We were advised by our Legation in Dublin that the Irish Department of External Affairs has wired instructions to the Irish Charge d'Affaires in Berlin to make the representations which we requested with respect to the inmates of concentration, detention, and forced labor camps.

Our Embassy in Moscow cabled that the Board's message regarding possible further victims of Nazi persecution in the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau was delivered to the Soviet Foreign Office and that our interest in the welfare of these people and in measures for their protection was expressed. The Embassy advised that no information with regard to the civilian populations of the areas covered by the recent advances of the Soviets has as yet been released.

From London we were informed that, on the basis of reports from sources said to be reliable indicating that Germany has started the annihilation of the remaining Jews interned in German-held areas, and in the belief that a strong attitude may achieve beneficial results, a private organization in London has urged the Czechoslovak Government to approach Germany through the protecting powers, the Holy See, and the International Red Cross. This information was set forth in a note from a representative of the Czechoslovak Government in which he expressed his Government's concern in this matter and suggested that since it is a matter of interest to many Allied governments, they might collectively make strong representations through the channels mentioned. He pointed out that the Czechoslovak Government has no official contact with the protecting powers and expressed the wish of his Government that the United States Government might consider taking steps to save the remainder of the interned and deported Allied citizens,

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adding that should this Government deem it advisable to undertake collective action, the Czechoslovak Government would willingly associate itself with such a procedure. It was indicated that similar notes were sent to the British and Soviet missions.

Representative Mann reported that the same private organization in London sent a message through the International Red Cross delegate there to the President of Intercross in Geneva, urging that the latter publicly demand for the remaining Jewish internees in German hands the guarantees of the Geneva Convention and the Tokyo Project and that a special Intercross mission be sent to make representations for this purpose to the highest German authorities.

Reports on Conditions in Concentration Camps

We learned from Representative McClelland that, according to postcards recently received in Switzerland, an unknown number of Jewish women formerly at Theresienstadt apparently are employed at the strenous task of clearing bombing debris in the city of Hamburg.

The exchangees who recently arrived in Switzerland from Bergen Belsen reported that early in January more than 25,000 Jewish deportees, men and women, from Auschwitz and nearby Upper Silesian camps arrived in Bergen Belsen, where they were "housed" under the most primitive conditions in tents. They apparently are to be transferred gradually to other parts of Germany as labor.

The exchangees further stated that, although parcels reaching the camp were properly delivered to them, the number of parcels was pitifully inadequate to the need. This was indicated to be due, according to all available information, to deterioration in land transport in Germany rather than to any withholding of parcels, which are generally distributed if they actually reach a camp. Representative McClelland reported that the exchangees were in a state of acute under-nourishment, as evidenced by the fact that three of them died during the short space of their stay in Switzerland. He stressed that there is every reason to believe that the extreme malnutrition from which the exchangees were suffering is far from confined to Bergen Belsen but is common to all German concentration camps and deportee work companies. He urged that the attention of competent military authorities and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration be drawn again to the fact that tens of thousands of internees in similar or worse

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physical condition probably will be found as Germany is occupied by Allied forces.

RELIEF PARCELS

A cable was received from Representative McClelland advising us that the International Red Cross has now received definite confirmation that three freight cars carrying the first shipment of Board parcels sent via Gothenburg, which were previously reported held up at Warnemuende, near Luebeck, went forward to concentration camps early in January.

EVACUEES FROM BERGEN BELSEN

The Director General of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration advised us by letter that instructions have been sent to the Chief of the UNRRA mission in Italy with respect to arrangements for the transportation and reception of the 1,672 evacuees from Bergen Belsen being removed from Switzerland to Philippeville.

REPORTS ON SITUATION IN RUMANIA

According to information sent by wire from Intercross delegates in Bucharest and relayed to us by Representative McClelland, the number of Jews now in Rumania is about 285,000. Of these, about 110,000 are in Bucharest, some 132,000 are in the former kingdom of Rumania (Walachia and Moldavia), and the remainder are in southern Transylvania and southern Bukovina. A recent Intercross Mission investigating the situation in northern Transylvania, where there were about 150,000 Jews at the time of the 1939 census, found only about 6,000, almost all of whom were escapees from Hungarian forced labor camps. Later reports indicate that the number may rise to 8,000.

Representative Katzki cabled us from Ankara that Jewish Agency representatives in Istanbul informed him that Dr. Ernst Marton received no reply to his memorandum to the Rumanian Government proposing that certain enemy nationals in Rumania be exchanged for deportees from Transylvania. He also reported that, according to a news item with a Bucharest date line, the Hungarian Government, responding to a proposal of the Rumanian Government that an Intercross commission be allowed to investigate the fate of Transylvanian deportees, denied the allegations upon which the proposal of the Rumanian Government was based.

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LATIN-AMERICAN PASSPORTS

We received from our Embassy in Quito a telegram advising that the Ecuadoran Foreign Office has indicated its agreement to our request that its representative in Geneva be instructed by wire to advise the protective power of Ecuador that the validity of the passports held by 147 Bergen Belsen internees has been extended. The Foreign Office further stated that the bearers of the passports in question should be granted protection, provided this Government guarantees that the passports will be turned over to a designated Ecuadoran official immediately upon liberation of the bearers.

VISAS FOR PERSONS IN ENEMY TERRITORY

A communication from the Ecuadoran Foreign Office sent to us by our Embassy in Quito states that existing Ecuadoran legislation will not permit the Government of Ecuador to undertake measures similar to the special visa program developed by this Government for the benefit of certain categories of persons in enemy territory.

RELIEF CAMPS IN ITALY

A cable was sent to Ambassador Kirk in Rome last week requesting him to verify for us a news report that some 5,000 to 6,000 Yugoslavs, including approximately 1,000 Jews, have been returned to Yugoslavia from relief camps in Italy at the request of Marshal Tito. It was also reported that stateless persons and refugees from Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and northern Italy will be placed in the camps vacated by the Yugoslavs, but that only a few stateless persons are being moved there from camps in central Italy at present and that maximum use of the camps probably will be made only after the liberation of northern Italy. The report received from Ambassador Kirk this week stated that actually some 3,500 Yugoslavs were repatriated from camps in Italy at Tito's request, but that it was not possible to ascertain the number of Jews involved. He was unable to find any basis for the report that stateless persons from outside Italy would be accommodated in these camps since authorities there have as yet formulated no such plan.

TERMINATION OF WAR REFUGEE BOARD OFFICE IN TURKEY

In an analysis of conditions affecting the possibilities for further Board operations in Turkey, Representative Katzki stated that future emigration which may take place from Rumania or Bulgaria will be of a normal type and not in the nature of rescue activities. He expressed the view that inadequate

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sources of information and communication channels render impossible the orderly organization or direction from Turkey of any rescue activities from enemy or enemy-occupied areas which might be undertaken through the Balkans. Under the circumstances, it appears that the maintenance of a War Refugee Board office in Turkey is no longer warranted, and Representative Katzki has accordingly been requested to return to Washington for consultation.

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000765

FEB 8 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000766

FEB 8 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000767

FEB 8 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000768

FEB 8 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000769

FEB 8 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Sincerely,

W Bill

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000770

FEB 8 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000771

FEB 8 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000772

FEB 8 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 2/3/45

000773

FEB 8 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 22 to 27, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inn 2/3/45

009794

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of January 22 to 27, 1945

SITUATION OF JEWS IN GERMAN-CONTROLLED AREAS

Conditions in Concentration Camps

In connection with the reply of German authorities to the Irish Government, asserting that the rumor of their intention to exterminate the Jews in Auschwitz and Birkenau is pure invention without any basis, Representative McClelland pointed to a press dispatch from Berlin last October stating that officials there declared that reports circulated by Polish circles in London that the Germans "had carried out mass executions at Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps were devoid of any foundation as were similar reports circulated recently regarding the Pruszkow camp." Our request to McClelland that a communication be transmitted to the Germans with all possible speed to inform them that their statement to the Irish has been noted and that the United States Government accordingly expects that Jews and other survivors in German camps will be kept alive has been made the subject of an urgent note delivered to the Swiss Federal Political Department.

Representative McClelland advised us that he has been unable to obtain any reliable confirmation of reports to the effect that general orders to kill all internees who cannot be evacuated before Allied advances have gone out to SS officers in control of Jewish camps. From an analysis of considerable fragmentary information assembled over a period of several months regarding the course of Nazi policy toward Jewish deportees, and from recent statements of two intelligent Jewish women who reached Switzerland late in December, McClelland indicated his belief that it is reasonable to conclude that the Nazis have abandoned extermination of Jews as a general policy. This appears to be particularly true insofar as the physically able are concerned, although there is still a tendency toward small-scale exterminations of elderly people and children. The two Jewish women, who had been deported from Drancy late in July and were inmates at Auschwitz for the three-month period from August through October 1944, reported that, while they were not able to observe movements in the men's camps, convoys of from 3,000 to 6,000 Jewish women were brought to Auschwitz from Warsaw, Radom, Lodz, and Kielce, and then transferred to Germany as labor during the early fall of 1944, in an apparent effort

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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on the part of the Germans to prevent their capture in the event of a Russian advance. The two women were included with some 200 other Hungarian and 300 French and Dutch Jewish women who were transferred from Auschwitz to a work camp in Weiskirchen, near Kratzay, Sudetenland, on October 31. Further indication of this movement of Jewish deportees into Germany as labor is a similar transfer of 3,500 Hungarian and Slovak women from Auschwitz to Bergen Belsen in late September 1944, referred to in a recent report. Apparently the whole Upper Silesian industrial region of Katowice, Poland, and Beuthen and Gleiwitz, Germany, is honeycombed with work camps of Jews deported from occupied or formerly occupied countries, and the camp at Weiskirchen is part of another complex of Jewish work camps administered from the concentration camp at Grossrosen, near Breslau. It is expected that the present rapid Russian advance will reveal whether the SS exterminates Jewish internees whom they cannot evacuate.

Concerning conditions in the camp at Auschwitz while they were there, the two women reported that no indiscriminate shooting of internees occurred. They observed little wanton brutality in the "selection" of the ill for extermination and even some slight inclination on the part of the camp authorities to allow them to recover. As in all such camps, the mortality rate is high, due primarily to under-nourishment, unhygienic conditions, and, especially, to exposure for lack of sufficient clothing.

From Representative Mann we learned that a private organization in London received information from its representative in Switzerland to the effect that Theresienstadt is being transformed into an extermination camp. An eye-witness was said to have reported that 200 to 250 Jews per day are dying at Theresienstadt and that a crematorium has been erected there at a place called Nakrete. A broadcast from Moscow attributed to a former member of the Czechoslovak Parliament a statement that the Germans are converting Theresienstadt into an extermination camp along the lines of Majdanek. A British newspaper of January 21 carried a brief news item from the Associated Press stating that the American Seventh Army discovered "Nazi gas chambers containing the bodies of 6,000 people of Alsace" at the entrance to Natzweile.

These reports were relayed to Representative McClelland, who cabled in reply that, as requested, he had made them the basis of an urgent appeal to the International Red Cross to do all in its power to investigate their accuracy and to

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secure permission to visit Theresienstadt again as soon as possible. He also contacted the Swiss representative of the private organization in London and found that his information was principally to the effect that the Nazis have transferred a great many people from Theresienstadt into Germany proper since about last October, ostensibly as labor, but that he had received no information that the Germans were transforming the camp into an extermination center. The number of persons involved in these transfers was not known, nor was the fate of the many elderly people unfit for work who must have been left behind. However, the customary postcards dated the end of November which reached Geneva this week from Theresienstadt contained no indication that the situation in the camp has changed so far as treatment is concerned.

According to information furnished to us by Representative McClelland incident to our request that the International Red Cross be urged to arrange to have an Intercross Delegate stationed in or sent on an extended visit to Bergen Belsen, Intercross has on its own initiative during the past three months filed two formal applications with German authorities seeking permission to visit this camp. The last flat refusal of the Germans to give the Committee the desired authorization was in early December. It was McClelland's understanding that Intercross has not relaxed its efforts to this end, and he informed us that, aside from its formal applications, several "ad hoc" attempts have been made by Intercross to visit the camp for the purpose of exercising closer control over the arrival and distribution of relief shipments. He indicated that he would nevertheless convey to Intercross the Board's views on this matter.

Proposed Warning by United Nations

A number of urgent requests have been received by the Board from private organizations in this country for the issuance of a United Nations warning to the German Government and the German people against further exterminations and other forms of persecution of Jews in Germany and German-occupied territory. Believing that action along this line at the present stage of the war might have a marked psychological effect, drafts of an appropriate warning were prepared and submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration in the event that the issuance of such a warning were considered feasible.

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COOPERATION OF SWISS GOVERNMENT

In response to our request for information regarding the possibilities for a continued flow of refugees from Nazi persecution to be admitted into Switzerland without limit as to number, we were informed by Representative McClelland that in the course of several months of close contact with various Swiss Government officials and agencies concerning admission of refugees, he had observed no lack of willingness on the part of the Swiss to grant temporary asylum to large numbers of such persons. He pointed out that, on the contrary, the Swiss have themselves been active in efforts to expedite and organize evacuations of refugees from Axis territory and have repeatedly interceded with the Germans for this purpose, as in the case of the plan to evacuate more than 12,000 Jews from Budapest. Nearly 10,000 French refugee children from the Mulhouse region were recently received in Switzerland. McClelland added that entry of the second convoy of evacuees from Bergen Belsen in early December caused the Swiss Federal Police some disquiet, but he felt it understandable that the Swiss should have been somewhat disturbed for military and internal security reasons over the unannounced arrival of more than 1,300 unknown persons from Germany.

In this connection, Representative McClelland stated that our assurances with respect to the maintenance and evacuation of refugees admitted to Switzerland have been repeatedly conveyed to the Swiss, who have not as yet elected to utilize our offers of maintenance. However, he reported further, they took occasion during recent discussions regarding rescue operations to indicate informally their concern over the difficulties encountered in their efforts to import into Switzerland certain foodstuffs purchased for general Swiss consumption.

RELIEF PARCELS

It appears that, with the rapid deterioration of the internal rail transportation system in Germany, the Germans are becoming increasingly less inclined to make freight cars available to the International Red Cross for parcels services into Germany. According to the American Red Cross representative in Geneva, it is possible for officials to apply the terms of the Geneva Convention to induce the Germans to supply transportation for prisoner-of-war parcels, but no such leverage can be exerted in the case of shipments to

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unassimilated persons, for whom parcel distributions are only tolerated by the Nazis. On the other hand, with the spread of internal disorganization in Germany and the concomitant breakdown of transportation, there seems to be a developing independence and openness to valuable local working arrangements among camp commanders and isolated SS groups. The situation with respect to accessibility to the International Red Cross is reported to be developing most favorably in all of the camps in the Vienna area, particularly the Jewish camps. Willingness to collaborate in relief activities is being indicated by the head of the SS group in charge of the camps there and by the German SS officer who is specifically in charge of all Hungarian Jewish deportees in Austria. As a further example of this trend, a delegate working out of Intercross headquarters at Uffing, near Munich, recently was admitted to the hitherto unvisited and unknown camp of Landsberg-am-Lech, in Eastern Bavaria, where there are about 15,000 internees, of whom eighty per cent are Jewish deportees. The delegate reported that the commander of the camp was unusally accommodating and that if he had had any means of transportation or a supply of parcels available at his headquarters, he would have encountered no difficulty in making direct personal delivery of them to this camp. The same circumstances were said to apply to the camp at Dachau, also near Munich.

These circumstances, indicating the transportation difficulties incident to shipping Board parcels and the otherwise promising possibilities in this field, were outlined in a cable from Representative McClelland this week in which he recommended that the Board give serious consideration to endeavoring to obtain a number of five to seven-ton trucks. He expressed the conviction that if four or five such vehicles could be made available to him to be lent to the International Red Cross Division of Special Relief for use in delivering Board parcels to accessible camps, a great deal of good work could be accomplished, particularly in the Vienna area. He pointed out that the far superior control possibilities as to the safe reception of parcels by intended beneficiaries represent a further important advantage in truck deliveries, as contrasted with the uncertain controls obtainable with shipments made via German railroads, when it is frequently difficult to trace freight cars which may be held up on sidings for weeks and even months without the knowledge of Intercross, as recently occurred when cars carrying parcels from Gothenburg were detained near Lübeck. It was thought that trucks might possibly be rented, purchased, or otherwise acquired in Switzerland, although the Swiss army is apparently very reluctant to allow such equipment to leave the country; tires

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and fuel supplies probably would have to be provided from the outside in the event that trucks could be acquired. The urgency of action along the lines recommended was indicated in McClelland's estimate that the time still available for this invaluable work is, conservatively, not more than four or five months.

EVACUATIONS THROUGH TURKEY

According to a summary sent to us by Representative Katzki, a total of 6,527 persons passed through Turkey in transit to Palestine during the year 1944. This number is exclusive of 282 persons from Holland who were exchanged for German nationals in July. The number of children and youths up to 18 years of age included was 1,737, representing approximately 1,000 orphans repatriated from Transnistria, 327 children accompanied by their parents, and approximately 410 children emigrating without their parents. Of the total, 163 came from Hungary, 539 from Greece, 1,392 from Bulgaria, and 4,433 from Rumania, a large proportion of the latter being Polish, Slovakian, Ruthenian, and Hungarian refugees who had succeeded in escaping to Rumania. Ten groups arrived by sea from Constanza, the other refugees from Bulgaria and Rumania traveling by railroad. All of the refugees from Greece escaped by sea.

LATIN-AMERICAN PASSPORTS

We cabled to our Embassy in Quito information which we received indicating that imminent danger threatens 147 persons who are interned at Bergen Belsen and who hold passports issued in the name of Ecuador, the validity of which has expired or is near expiration. The Embassy was asked to transmit to Ecuadoran officials the urgent request of this Government that, to avoid a tragic loss of life, the protective power of Ecuador be notified that the validity of the passports in question has been extended and that the individuals involved are to be accorded protection.

A dispatch from our Embassy in Santiago brought information received by the Embassy from the Foreign Office to the effect that instructions have been cabled to the Chilean Legation in Bern to request the Swiss Government to inform the German Government that the United States has been empowered to negotiate exchanges of claimants to Chilean nationality for German nationals in this hemisphere. In this connection, the Foreign Office pointed out that the Government of Chile reserves the right to authorize or deny entry of the individuals involved to Chile.

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UNITED STATES VISAS FOR PERSONS IN ENEMY TERRITORY

The Swiss Foreign Office advised our Legation in Bern that lists of names of persons qualifying for the benefits of the Board's special visa program and last known to be living in Hungary were communicated to the Hungarian Foreign Office by Swiss representatives, and that the Hungarians made no response to the Swiss with respect to such lists. It was the view of Swiss representative in Budapest that, since the persons in question are no longer at the addresses given for them and are probably in hiding, investigations by Hungarian authorities could have only unfavorable results. Accordingly, the Swiss representative proposed that future such lists not be communicated to Hungarian authorities but be retained at the Swiss Legation, where everything possible will be done to aid them if the persons listed call there. Our Legation reported that it is requesting the Swiss Foreign Office to have the Swiss Legation in Berlin classify these people, some of whom have without doubt been moved to Germany, as exchangeable, in accordance with the procedure recently established. The Board's approval of this action was cabled to the Legation.

RESIGNATION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR--APPOINTMENT OF SUCCESSOR

As a result of new duties recently assigned to him as Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Pehle resigned as Executive Director of the Board on January 27. Brigadier-General William O'Dwyer was appointed as the new Executive Director to succeed him.

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

000781

JAN 27 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000782

JAN 27 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000783

JAN 27 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

EBT

EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000784

JAN 27 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000785

JAN 27 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/27/45 JWP

000786

JAN 27 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000787

JAN 27 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Sincerely,

/S/ John

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000788

JAN 27 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/27/45 FEA

000789

JAN 27 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 15 to 20, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/27/45

000790

DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of January 15 to 20, 1945

COOPERATION OF SWISS AND SWEDISH GOVERNMENTS

We cabled Representative McClelland that private relief agencies in this country which are hopeful of being able to arrange large-scale escapes of refugees from Nazi persecution have expressed doubts as to whether the Swiss Government is willing to continue to permit a flow of refugees to enter Switzerland without limit as to number. We asked him to inform us of the results of any investigation he might find it necessary to make in this connection. At the same time, we authorized him, if he should consider it useful now or at any time in the future, to emphasize to Swiss officials that the assurances previously given by this Government, concerning the maintenance and evacuation of refugees from enemy persecution admitted to Switzerland, were not restricted to any particular number of persons and that continued Swiss cooperation in this humanitarian endeavor by permitting the entry without regard to numbers of all such refugees who may be able to reach Switzerland would be greatly appreciated by the United States Government.

We sent a cable to Representative Olsen in Stockholm, along the lines of a message to Representative McClelland outlined in a recent report, requesting that he visit the Swedish Foreign Minister and urge that continued efforts be made from now on, in view of the increasing danger to Jews in German-controlled territory, to keep the surviving victims of Nazi persecution alive during the coming stages of hostilities in Europe. We enumerated the largest known concentrations of Jews in Axis territory, including Camp Bergen Belsen with more than 9,000 inmates. We asked that he make clear to the Swedish Foreign Minister our view that frequent and extended visits of Swedish Consuls to places and regions where Jews are concentrated constitute one of the most effective means of preventing their further extermination, as proved in Budapest, where the presence of Swedish personnel appears to have been instrumental in saving many lives. We requested Representative Olsen to emphasize to the Foreign Minister the mounting evidence of confusion among local German officials and their increasing accessibility to psychological pressure to dissuade them from carrying out the extermination policies ordered by central German authorities and to urge that full advantage of this state of mind be taken, through unofficial as well as official channels, in the interest of saving lives. It was

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pointed out that we are seeking unremitting pursuit of the suggested activities on the part of the Swedes as long as the danger lasts and not one-time acts of intercession. In view of the perilous situation of the Jews in areas which the Germans may soon have to evacuate, and in view of recent reports indicating the effectiveness of publicity and other forms of psychological pressure upon German officials, we also asked Minister Johnson and Representative Olsen to make special efforts to increase such pressure through all channels available to them.

By way of specific action, we suggested that the desirability of delegates of the Swedish Y. M. C. A. and the Swedish Red Cross being stationed in or sent on extended visits to Bergen Belsen, to assist in the distribution of the large number of relief parcels recently reaching this camp with their assistance, be urged upon these organizations.

We also cabled Representative McClelland requesting that, in view of the large number of relief parcels recently reaching Bergen Belsen, he urge upon the International Red Cross the desirability of having an Intercross delegate stationed in or sent on an extended visit to the camp to assist in the distribution of such parcels. We indicated that this suggestion to safeguard the lives of the camp inmates is made in line with our recent request that Swiss and Intercross efforts be redoubled to protect the remaining Jews in Germany and German-occupied territory in view of the increasing danger threatening their survival.

To our Legations in Bern and Stockholm and Representatives McClelland and Olsen we cabled our understanding that the Swiss and Swedish Ministers in Washington, at the request of a private organization, are transmitting to their Governments requests that Switzerland and Sweden again appeal to the German Government to refrain from further extermination and persecution of the Jews remaining in German-occupied territory. We suggested that it be indicated to Swiss and Swedish officials that this Government would welcome an appeal along such lines.

SITUATION OF JEWS IN GERMAN-OCCUPIED TERRITORY--AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU

Representative Mann cabled us that representatives of the Czech Government and various Jewish groups have approached the Russian Embassy in London, pointing out the possibility that, as the Red armies approach the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau, the Germans will make a last-minute effort to

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exterminate every one in these camps. They urged that the Russians try to reach the camps at the earliest possible moment and that the Russian Government endeavor to provide every possible means to protect the camp inmates from last-minute slaughter at the hands of the Germans. Representative Mann was informed that the Russian Embassy promised to forward the request to Moscow. The same groups approached him urging that the War Refugee Board send a cable to Moscow requesting that the attention of Soviet authorities be directed to the matter. We immediately cabled our Embassy in Moscow, pointing to fears of a German massacre of Jewish and other survivors in these and other camps in that area prior to retreat, and asking that the urgency of addressing suitable warnings to Germans in those localities by radio and pamphlets be suggested to Soviet authorities. Our feeling that, in view of the nearness of Soviet forces, such warnings by them would be helpful and effective was indicated. The Embassy was asked to raise with Soviet authorities the matter of the feasibility of their taking direct measures for the protection of camp inmates. We further requested that, as an indication of whether the Germans are continuing their policy of exterminating the remaining Jews previous to retreat, the Embassy endeavor to ascertain for us whether the 60,000 to 80,000 Jews reported in Lodz a few months ago were found alive.

From the United States Legation at Dublin, we learned that, at the request of a member of the Dail, the Irish Government addressed an inquiry to the Government of Germany concerning the rumor that the Germans intend to exterminate the Jews in the camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau. The reply of the German authorities was that the rumor is pure invention, devoid of foundation, and that if the camps should be abandoned, the inmates would be evacuated. A cable was sent to our Legation at Dublin asking that this Government's appreciation of their humane activities in the matter of threatened Jewish inmates of German camps be conveyed to the Irish Government. In this connection, and in view of the nearness of these camps to the front, we asked that the Irish Government be advised that it would be greatly appreciated if a further communication could be dispatched with the greatest possible speed to German authorities, informing them that their reply to Ireland has been noted by the Government of the United States and that the latter accordingly expects that Jews and other survivors of these and other concentration, detention, and labor camps in Germany and German-controlled territory will be kept alive by German authorities.

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EVACUEES FROM BERGEN BELSEN

We notified the War Department and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration that plans for the possible use of the refugee camp at Philippeville, in connection with the removal from Switzerland of 1,352 evacuees from Bergen Belsen, should include the initial group of 320 persons who reached Switzerland from Bergen Belsen in August, making the total number of persons involved 1,672. We were informed by Assistant Secretary of War McCloy that messages are being sent to appropriate officials in the theater concerning transportation arrangements, but indicating that if they so recommend, consideration will be given to arranging accommodation for these refugees at some camp other than Philippeville.

Representative Mann advised us that he has taken up with the Refugee Section of the British Foreign Office the question of admission of these refugees into Palestine, stressing the urgency of the matter.

JEWISH REFUGEES IN SHANGHAI

Information reaching us from private sources through our Legation in Stockholm referred to a message cabled to the King of Sweden from Palestine requesting that Swedish protective passports be given to certain rabbinical groups, representing a part of some 20,000 Jewish refugees in Shanghai, and that Sweden send a vessel to evacuate them. After an investigation undertaken at the request of the Swedish Foreign Office, the Swedish Consul in Shanghai reported that evacuation from Japanese areas is impossible. From the same private source, a later report contained information, somewhat at variance with the first report, given by representatives of a private organization who stated that they had discussed the matter with the Japanese Minister in Stockholm and were given to understand that the Japanese would interpose no objection to the departure of the rabbinical group from Shanghai, provided their reception in some neutral country could be guaranteed. It was said that the only practicable route for them to take is via Russia, and the assistance of the United States Government in obtaining Russian transit visas was sought.

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According to information obtained from private sources in the United States, Jewish officials in Palestine have received a message from the Vatican to the effect that the Japanese Government agrees to the removal of interned refugee rabbinical scholars in Shanghai as part of an exchange scheme. This information was cabled to Mr. Myron Taylor at the Vatican with the request that he ascertain precise facts regarding the matter and cable us such information as he is able to obtain.

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

000795

JAN 24 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowley:inp 1/19/45

00796

JAN 23 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 1/19/45

000797

JAN 20 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/19/45

000798

JAN 20 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:inp 1/19/45

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JAN 20 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) John

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/19/45

Doo —

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JAN 20 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/19/45

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JAN 20 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/19/45 JWP

000802

JAN 20 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/19/45 JWP

000803

JAN 20 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 8 to 13, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

Original signed by Mr. Pehle

EBT EBTowler:inp 1/19/45

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

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Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of January 8 to 13, 1945

EVACUEES FROM BERGEN BELSEN

Incident to the matter of evacuating from Switzerland the group of Jews who recently arrived from Bergen Belsen, Representative McClelland cabled us that the Swiss Federal Police have requested that an earlier group of 320 persons who arrived in Switzerland from Bergen Belsen in August 1944 be included in the evacuation of refugees from Switzerland now being worked out by the Board in cooperation with the War Department and UNRRA. The two groups comprise a total of 1,672 persons to be removed from Swiss territory. It was indicated that, if necessary, the Swiss Federal Railways are prepared to furnish trains for the transportation of these people to a French port of embarkation. Representative Mann was advised that the first group of 320 persons should be included in discussions with the British with respect to the question of the admission of these refugees into Palestine.

According to information which was furnished to McClelland by responsible members of the group which arrived in Switzerland in December, the number of Jewish deportees in the camp at Bergen Belsen at the end of November 1944 was as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | From Holland and Belgium | 4,500 |
| 2. | Slovak and Hungarian women and girls, including a few children transferred from Auschwitz during September 1944 | 3,500 |
| 3. | Poles holding Latin-American documents | 349 |
| 4. | Jews of unspecified nationality in a punitive block | 300 |
| 5. | Jews of such nationalities as Portuguese, Argentine, Brazilian, etc., in a so-called "Spanish" block | 300 |
| 6. | Greeks | 150 |
| 7. | Hungarians, chiefly craftsmen recently transferred from Vienna | 89 |
| | Total | 9,188 |

It was indicated that a fairly accurate list of some 1,700 persons in the first group is available in Switzerland. Several hundred persons in this group are said to hold Latin-American documents or are registered for Palestine immigration. Most of those in the second group are housed in tents and are in a very needy condition, especially with respect to clothing. They are expected to be gradually shifted to work camps in Germany. The majority of group three are classified as Palestine subjects, about thirty claiming United States

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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nationality. McClelland has secured a list of the persons in this group, which includes some Jews who took part in the defense of the Warsaw ghetto in April 1943 and later escaped into Hungary. A list of the names of the persons in group seven is also available.

SITUATION IN RUMANIA

From the United States Mission in Bucharest a report concerning the position of Jews in Rumania was received. On December 15, 1944, the Radescue cabinet approved and the King signed a bill which abolishes all legal discrimination on the basis of race and seeks to reestablish Jews in the country upon a basis of equality. The provisions of the bill include:

> The re-appointment of Jewish officials and the rehiring of Jewish employees for those dismissed under the previous discriminatory laws.
>
> Under certain conditions, committees with a judge or a Labor Ministry agent will decide upon reappointing dismissed employees on considering existing capacities of designated firms. Rehiring preference is given to those hardest hit by the old racial legislation.
>
> Properties which Jews lost through the racial laws are to be restored and any sales or mortgages of such properties are to be annulled. Jewish owners and tenants can return to houses from which they were evicted.
>
> A grace period is provided to permit civil servants, pensioners, low-paid workers and artisans, war disabled, war widows, and war orphans to remain until April 23, 1945, in view of the difficulties of changing homes in the middle of the winter. This provision also applies to certain public authorities and institutions.

With regard to the possible later issuance of a law to deal with the financial rights of Jews where the State is the debtor, a Rumanian newspaper held that for the assistance of the national economy and the fulfillment of the armistice terms it has been considered "right and reasonable not to burden the State with the execution of considerable financial obligations arising from the repeal of the racial laws." The entire Bucharest press of December 15 agreed that the new law constitutes a beginning in furthering a better atmosphere of harmony and in eliminating a "disgraceful blot upon Rumania's history." One paper emphatically approved the new bill, while two others suggested amendments to assist Jews in being reinstated in their places of employment and in being restored to their homes with more speed, one of the

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latter taking the position that the decree seems more concerned with safeguarding the interests of those who have profited, in most cases cruelly and brutally, by the wrongs done to the Jews than in repairing these wrongs.

The local Jewish reaction to the bill was unfavorable, the general feeling, as expressed by Dr. Filderman, the head of the Jewish Association in Rumania, being that it grants to Jewish employees, owners, and tenants not a right, but a favor, depending on costly, long-drawn-out law suits, resulting not in the repeal, but in the maintenance of racial laws. It is their view that the bill's provision for the maintenance of all employees who replaced Jews through the effect of the racial laws compels Jews to go from employer to Judge and leaves them at the mercy of employers and commissions. The provision for the postponement of the payment of damages until after the war they regard as tantamount to a refusal to pay damages, and the extension of the validity of leases to April 23, 1945, they apparently fear may be the first move to delay indefinitely the restoration of Jews to their homes by subsequent extensions of the grace period. To the argument of government officials that it is impossible "to lay fresh burdens on the State" by paying now the damages due to Jewish owners Dr. Filderman advanced the opinion that it is easier for a population of 15,000,000 to share the damages incurred than for a population of 750,000--half of whom have been murdered, while the other half are ill-clad, barefoot, and hungry--to be compelled to beg for posts and dwellings and to wait for peace to receive the compensation due them.

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES

Representative Mann recently advised us that the Inter-governmental Committee proposes to send the equivalents of $300,000 to Rumania and $50,000 to Northern Italy and to raise by credit the equivalent of $300,000 in Hungary for refugee relief, transfers in the first two instances to be accomplished by buying currencies of those countries in Switzerland with precautions to see that no assistance is thereby given to the enemy. Approval of the British Treasury for the proposed transfers was obtained, and the Inter-governmental Committee requested the approval of United States authorities before proceeding with its instructions. A cable was sent to Representative Mann advising him that, in view of the urgency of the relief needs in those areas, the State Department, the Board, and the Treasury Department approve the proposed methods of transfer for inter-governmental Committee expenditures.

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VATICAN COOPERATION

The Apostolic Delegate in Washington, in a letter to the Board, advised us of the receipt of a communication from the Holy See, in response to renewed appeals for intercession by the Vatican to stop the extermination of Hungarian Jewry, stating that the Holy See has never interrupted its intense activities in behalf of Hungarian Jews. It was further stated that the Apostolic Nunciature of Budapest and the Hungarian Bishops have constantly lent themselves to this work with every resource and effort possible and that a substantial contribution was recently made to the Apostolic Nunciature for alleviating the sufferings of the Jews. It was indicated that since it has become impossible for the Holy See to correspond with Budapest, the Apostolic Nunciature in Berlin has been directed to concern itself with this matter.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROGRAM

We received a letter from the Office of War Information indicating that that office shares the view of the Board that everything must be done to combat the increasing ruthlessness to be expected on the part of the Germans during the closing period of the war. We were advised that careful attention will be given to our suggestions for the preparation of German programs for the greatest possible effect in preserving the lives of Jews remaining in German territory.

FOOD PARCELS

Representative McClelland advised us that, according to information received by the International Red Cross from its delegate in Germany, the retention of a shipment of approximately 15,000 Board parcels near Lubeck is part of a general stand-still of all parcels transshipped during the last two months from Gothenburg via Lubeck, including those for prisoners of war. Apparently, a closed east-west transport corridor was established by the Germans for bringing up supplies for their recent western offensive, and no non-military freight traffic in a north-south direction was permitted to traverse the corridor. For some weeks Intercross has been negotiating to move the stocks which were held up, and on January 10 an unconfirmed report was received that three cars containing Board parcels went forward on January 4. It is expected that the shipment of some 60,000 Board parcels via Toulon can be handled with greater facility, since they will be moved into Germany from the south.

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UNITED STATES VISAS FOR PERSONS IN ENEMY TERRITORY

Following the approach made by our Embassy in Ankara to the Turkish Government with respect to the special visa programs developed to benefit certain categories of persons in enemy territory, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has informed our Embassy that the rupture of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Germany has made it impossible to carry into effect our proposal for the issuance of Turkish visas to affected categories of persons in Germany. While the liberation of the Balkan countries by the Allied armies was regarded as solving the problem of persecuted persons in those countries, Turkish Consulates in the Balkans have received appropriate instructions with respect to Turkish visas for persons with qualifications for United States visas.

EVACUATIONS THROUGH TURKEY

Representative Katzki advised us that a group of approximately 360 persons, including children repatriated from Transnistria, refugees from Hungary, Slovakia, and Poland who had succeeded in escaping into Rumania, and Rumanian nationals, arrived in Istanbul by railroad on January 5. On January 6, a second group of approximately 280 persons, mainly Polish nationals who had succeeded in escaping to Rumania and had been in that country for some time, also arrived by train. Both groups left Istanbul en route for Palestine on January 7, the Turkish authorities having provided a special train for the purpose despite the difficult seasonal transportation problems of the railroads.

According to statistics reaching us from a private source, a total of 2,405 immigrants to Palestine transited Turkey during the months of October, November, and December 1944; 1,701 came from Rumania, 3 from Hungary, and 701 from Bulgaria. These numbers included 566 Hungarian refugees, 140 Polish refugees, and 380 Transnistrian orphans.

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

000209

JAN 16 1945

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,
John G. Winant,
The American Ambassador,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:rh 1/12/45

000010

JAN 17 1945

My dear Mr. Malin:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Patrick Malin,
Vice Director,
Intergovernmental Committee
on Refugees,
c/o American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:rh 1/22/45

000811

JAN 13 1945

Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Washington Liaison Branch,
G-2, M.I.S.,
Pentagon Building,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:rh 1/k2/45

Fax —

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JAN 13 1945

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Myron C. Taylor,
Department of State.

Enclosure.

EBTowler:rh 1/12/45

000013

JAN 13 1945

Dear Abe:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Sincerely,

(Signed) John

Honorable Abe Fortas,
Under Secretary of Interior,
Department of Interior,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:rh 1/12/45

000814

JAN 13 1945

Dear Mr. Bean:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Louis Bean,
The Bureau of the Budget,
Room 435,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler;rh 1/12/45

00015

JAN 13 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of War.

Enclosure.

EBT EBTowler:rh 1/12/45 JGH

00016

JAN 13 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to January 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State.

Enclosure.

Ebi EBTowler:rh 1/12/45 JCA

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JAN 13 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am pleased to send you herewith a copy of the report of the War Refugee Board for the week of January 1 to 6, 1945.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,

The Secretary of the Treasury.

Enclosure.

Original signed by Mr. Pehle

EBT EBT:hd 1/12/45

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DUPLICATE ORIGINAL

Report of the War Refugee Board
for the Week of January 1 to 6, 1945

JEWS IN GERMAN-CONTROLLED TERRITORY

It now appears to be a well-known practice for the Germans, before evacuating any area, to undertake to exterminate the surviving Jews in that area. Considering it necessary for this reason that the attention of Swiss and International Red Cross authorities be once more drawn to the danger faced by the Jewish survivors in German-controlled territory, we cabled our Legation in Bern and Representative McClelland requesting that the Swiss Foreign Minister and the President of the International Red Cross Committee be visited and urged to make continued efforts from now on to keep the surviving victims of Nazi persecution alive during the coming stages of hostilities in Europe.

In this connection, it was requested that specific reference be made to the three major concentrations of Jews known to exist in Axis territory, viz., Lodz with 60,000 to 80,000 inmates, Theresienstadt, where there are 40,000 to 60,000 inmates, and camps in Vienna with 18,000 inmates, as well as any other localities or regions where Jews are believed to survive. We asked that it be made clear that it is the view of this Government that frequent and extended visits of Swiss Consuls and Intercross delegates to places and regions where Jews are concentrated constitute one of the most effective means of preventing their further extermination, and pointed to the proved efficacy of this method in Budapest where, thanks to the presence of Swiss and Intercross personnel, many lives appear to have been saved. We indicated the desirability of emphasizing the mounting evidence of confusion among local German officials and their increasing accessibility to psychological pressure directed to dissuading them from carrying out the extermination policies ordered by central German authorities and of urging that full advantage be taken of this state of mind, through unofficial as well as official channels, in the interest of saving lives. With particular reference to German consent to permit Intercross inspection and care for Hungarian Jews engaged in forced labor in Germany and German-occupied territory, we suggested that immediate and continuing Intercross action to safeguard the lives of this largest group of Jews surviving under German rule be requested. We further urged that it be made clear to the Swiss and to Intercross that this approach is not a plea for one-time acts of intercession but is a request for unremitting pursuit of the suggested activities as long as the danger continues.

At the same time, in view of this situation and in view of his recent reports indicating the effectiveness of publicity and other forms of psychological pressure upon German officials, we requested Representative McClelland to make special efforts through all

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channels available to him to increase such pressure with a view to safeguarding the lives of the surviving victims of Nazi persecution.

PSYCHOLOGICAL MEASURES

In a letter to the Director of the Office of War Information, we advised him of the information available to the Board indicating that confusion and division of views within the rank and file of German officialdom have set in with regard to the Jewish question and that, whether because of fear of punishment or a desire to establish an alibi or as a result of defects in the Nazi machinery of control, officials on the spot seem not so determined as they once were to follow to the letter instructions from the authorities in Berlin with regard to the treatment of Jews. We pointed out that the policy of the central German authorities has, nevertheless, grown even more ruthless, if anything, and that they apparently intend to exterminate the Jews still alive in German-controlled territory as such territory is evacuated in the face of Allied advances, so that, ironically, the danger to these Jews becomes greater with every Allied military success.

We expressed the view that our reports demonstrate the compelling importance of increasing at this time the psychological warfare pressure on the local Nazi and satellite officials and suggested that heavy emphasis on General Eisenhower's statement of November 8, 1944, would be particularly helpful for this purpose. We indicated that the value of such psychological pressure is clearly shown in reports received by the Board from Hungary attesting to the important role which OWI programs played in halting the deportations of Jews from Hungary. For the assistance of the OWI in formulating a psychological warfare program along the lines requested, we listed the principal concentrations of Jews remaining in German-controlled territory, including in addition to the three groups mentioned above 100,000 to 200,000 Hungarian Jews in labor camps, presumably on the Austro-Hungarian border, in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Southern Germany, 1,000 to 2,000 internees at Bergen Belsen, and 16,000 Lithuanian Jews in labor camps in East Prussia.

SITUATION IN HUNGARY

Minister Johnson advised us that he had conveyed to the Swedish Foreign Office our request for action by the Swedish Legation in Budapest to extend protection and special treatment to Jews in Hungary with Spanish papers and visas. He was informed that for the time being the Foreign Office has no means of communication with the Swedish Legation in Budapest.

A report received from a private source through our Legation in Bern referred to a project to admit 14,000 Hungarian Jews into Switzerland

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and indicated that official information has been received that 1,000 are now ready to leave Budapest and may arrive in Switzerland shortly.

EVACUEES FROM BERGEN BELSEN

Following the request of Swiss authorities that the removal from Switzerland of the group of 1,355 Jewish evacuees from Bergen Belsen be facilitated, we cabled Representative Mann information concerning the composition of the group and the temporary nature of the accommodations arranged in Switzerland for them and requested that the question of their admission into Palestine be taken up with the British.

FOOD PARCELS

Representative McClelland cabled us of the receipt of a report from the International Red Cross that the freight cars which left Gothenburg some time ago with 15,023 War Refugee Board parcels have been inexplicably held up by German authorities at a point near Lubeck for almost two months and have not yet been forwarded to the concentration camps for which they were destined. He advised us that he had urged Intercross to investigate immediately the cause of the delay and that the latter has wired its Berlin delegate to take energetic steps to move these parcels.

With respect to the proposal for sending food parcels to Poland, McClelland advised us that Intercross will undertake to forward test shipments of 250 parcels each to a number of accessible camps in Poland.

EVACUATIONS THROUGH TURKEY

We learned from Representative Katzki that the British Embassy has received authorization for the issuance of Palestine entry certificates to a group of more than 600 emigrants en route from Rumania to Palestine and that it has also requested the Turkish Foreign Office to admit them into Turkey in transit.

SITUATION IN SLOVAKIA - LATIN AMERICAN DOCUMENTS

A cable from our Legation in Bern brought information, given by the Swiss in an informal statement, that a report from a Swiss representative at Bratislava indicated that nothing is accomplished by the transmission of Salvadoran identity papers to Jews in Slovakia since, according to the Permanent Intercross delegate, the Jews considering themselves Salvadorans underwent voluntary internment at the Marianka camp but were removed from this camp and probably by now have been deported. The Swiss representative observed that most of the Jews concerned were born of Slovakian nationality and have met with difficulty in their assertions to the German authorities

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that they were of Salvadoran nationality. It was said that persons applying anti-Jewish measures simply tore up the Salvadoran papers in the possession of these Jews.

Upon receipt of this information we cabled our Legation in Bern and Representative McClelland asking them to request the Swiss Government to protest such action in the name of the United States Government, and to point out to the German authorities that, as is well known to the German Government, the persons holding such identity papers had been recognized by the United States Government as eligible for exchange against civilian internees of German nationality and that, pending such exchange, it had been understood that they would be accorded the same treatment as the German Government would expect this Government to accord to civilian internees of German nationality. We also asked that the Swiss request information from the German Government concerning the present whereabouts of these holders of Salvadoran identity papers and assurances that they will be held in civilian internment camps pending exchange, and that they urge the German Government to give instructions to appropriate German officials that in the future they are to respect the rights of all persons declared by the United States Government to be eligible for exchange. We suggested that, if the names of the Salvadoran document holders deported from Marianka are available, they be furnished to the Swiss.

Supplementing this action, we asked that the attention of the Swiss Political Department be drawn to the fact that Salvador has informed Switzerland of its recognition of documents of this kind, and that inquiry be made as to the possibility of Switzerland, as protective power for Salvador, protesting to Germany against the reported destructions of documents issued in the name of Salvador and the deportation of the holders.

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

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