

✓

Cooperation with Other Governments: Neutral European; Switzerland

000614

CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS:
NEUTRAL EUROPEAN (SWITZERLAND)

FOR:

- Amendment to this License
- Extension of this License
- Renewal of this License
- Correspondence concerning this application .

Other (Specify)

1. FOR MATERIAL RE APPEAL TO SWISS GOVERNMENT TO ADMIT PERSECUTED JEWS AND POLITICAL REFUGEES
2. FOR MATERIAL RE PRESSURE ON THE SATELLITES TO DESIST FROM ABETTING PERSECUTIONS
3. FOR MATERIAL RE ASSURANCES TO THE SWISS RE LARGER TRANSBLOCKADE QUOTAS
4. FOR MATERIAL RE FACILITATING RESCUE OF CHILD REFUGEES FROM FRANCE
5. FOR MATERIAL RE PROTECTION AND PROJECTED EX CHANGE OF CERTAIN INTERNEES IN FRANCE & GERMANY HOLDING LATIN AMERICAN PASAPORTS OR PRS.

SEE:

1. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: OTHER EVACUATION PROJECTS
(TRANSFER OF JEWS FROM POLAND TO HUNGARY, ETC. (UOR))
2. MEASURES DIRECTED TOWARD HALTING PERSECUTION: APPROACHES TO OFFENDING GOVERNMENTS
(THE SATELLITES) (THE GERMANS)
3. POLICY MATTERS: THE BLOCKADE
4. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO SWITZERLAND (EVACUATION OF ABANDONED CHILDREN FROM FRANCE)
5. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: OTHER MEANS OF EFFECTING RESCUES
(RECOGNITION OF LATIN AMERICAN PASSPORTS)

000615

FFC-76
(11-42)

CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS:
NEUTRAL EUROPEAN (SWITZERLAND)

FOR:

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

6. FOR FURTHER MATERIAL RELATIVE TO THIS FILE

7. FOR MATERIAL RE STOCKPILES OF RELIEF MATERIALS IN SWITZERLAND

- SEE: 6 REPRESENTATIVES & SPECIAL ATTACHES: APPOINTMENTS
PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION
TO SWITZERLAND
PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO
SWITZERLAND
(JDC OPERATIONS IN FRANCE)
PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO
SWITZERLAND
(RESCUE OF REFUGEES FROM FRANCE (SECE))
7. POLICY MATTERS: FOOD & CLOTHING STOCKPILES IN NEUTRAL COUNTRIES

000616



LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bern, August 8, 1945

My dear General:

I take pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of your letter of July 14, 1945, and greatly appreciate the kind message which you have been good enough to transmit on behalf of the War Refugee Board and which I shall not fail to bring to the attention of the staff of the Legation.

It has been a real pleasure to have been able to render any possible assistance to Mr. McClelland, and I am glad of this opportunity to record my appreciation of his valuable and effective cooperation on many occasions.

Sincerely yours,

Brigadier General William O'Dwyer,
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Washington 25, D. C.

000617

LH
THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AMERICAN LEGATION,
BERN, SWITZERLAND.

 By air mail
Par avion

Brigadier General William O'Dwyer,
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Washington 25, D. C.,
U. S.

65669

RG. No. 825

000618

JUL 14 1945

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. E. M. Bernstein

FROM: William O'Dwyer

We have advised the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee of your success in getting the Swiss to agree to eliminate their charge of 2% in charitable remittances to Switzerland. Of course, the JDC was delighted to get this news and they paid great tribute to you for your efforts in this matter.

In this connection, I should like to express to you the appreciation of the War Refugee Board for all the work you have done in facilitating remittances to Switzerland for the programs which were such an important phase of our activities. As you know, these transfers to Switzerland were crucial to our life saving programs and your help has been very important. In a very real sense you share in our accomplishments and the saving of many lives.

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

FR:hd 7/2/45

*Original signed by
General O'Dwyer*

*Introduced copy
recd in file*

000619

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

Switzerland
**INCOMING
TELEGRAM**

C
DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

MF-1958

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (~~RESTRICTED~~)

B3bn

Dated April 15, 1945

9 47 AM

Rec'd 2:45 p.m.

DC/
LIAISON

Secretary of State

Washington

2214, April 15, 1 p.m.

CONTROL COPY

Contents telegram under reference (Department's
677, February 12, WRB 399) conveyed Swiss Government
which replied April 6 stating Swiss Legation, Germany
just obtained authorization visit Theresienstadt and
that representative being sent very soon. Swiss Le-
gation endeavoring obtain authorization visit Bergen
Bolsen.

HARRISON

JT

100620

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE AMLEGATION

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

BERN

677

The following for Muddle and McClelland is WRB 390.

Reference your 869, 885, and 887 of February 8,
appreciate your energetic steps.

In pursuing them further, will you please explain,
with special reference to your 887, that Department's 127
of January 9 had in mind indirect influence of Swiss
consular officials exercised by their presence near places
where Jews are concentrated and such informal conversations
which they could hold on the spot rather than official acts
of intercession.

GREW
(Acting)
(OLW)

WRB:MMV:KG
2/12/45

WE

For security reasons the
text of this message must
be closely guarded.

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

000621

DEPARTMENT
OF STATE

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

RECEIVED
DIVISION OF March 19, 1945
5 p.m.
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. ()

1945 MAR 20 PM 1 48

US URGENT

DC/L
LIAISON

AMLEGATION

BERN
1121
FOR HARRISON

As no word has been received from McClelland since
March 8 it is assumed that he has gone to Paris.

In order to enable the Board to be prepared for the
situation which may develop in Switzerland, it is requested
that you reply at once to the following questions:

- (1) Have any trucks been acquired for delivery of War
Refugee Board food parcels in enemy territory?
- (2) What are the prospects of evacuating detainees
from enemy territory to Switzerland?
- (3) Will Intercross use returning POW relief trucks
for evacuation of detainees to Switzerland?

The above is WRB 465.

WRB:MMV:KQ
3/19/45

For security reasons the
text of this message must
be closely guarded.

WE

ACHESON
(Acting)
(GLW)

SNP

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

4/5 X

000622

CABLE TO HARRISON, BERN, FROM DEPARTMENT AND WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Since no word has been received from McClelland since March 8, it is assumed that he has gone to Paris.

In order to enable the Board to be prepared for the situation which may develop in Switzerland, it is requested that you reply at once to the following questions:

1. Have any trucks been acquired for delivery of War Refugee Board food parcels in enemy territory?
2. What are the prospects of evacuating detainees from enemy territory to Switzerland?
3. Will Interross use returning POW relief trucks for the evacuation of detainees to Switzerland?

This is WRB Bern 465

4:50 p.m.
March 19, 1945

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y), Cohn, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel, Hutchison, McCormack, O'Dwyer, Files.

FH a.l.s.

FH:hd 3/19/45

100623

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. [REDACTED] 1945 FEB 12 PM 3 56

am Ref. B'
Gen O Guyer

AMLEGATION

BERN

577 X

The following for Huddle and McClelland is WRB 599,

Reference your 869, 885, and 887 of February 8,

appreciate your energetic steps.

In pursuing them further, will you please explain,
with special reference to your 887, that Department's 127
of January 9 had in mind indirect influence of Swiss
consular officials exercised by their presence near places
where Jews are concentrated and such informal conversations
which they could hold on the spot rather than official acts
of intercession.

GREW
(Acting)
(GLW)

[REDACTED]

For security reasons the
text of this message must
be classified "Secret".

WRB:MMV:KG
2/12/45

WE

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

000624

CABLE TO HUDDLE AND MCCLELLAND, BERN, SWITZERLAND, FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Reference your 869, 885, and 887 of February 8, appreciate your energetic steps.

In pursuing them further, will you please explain, with special reference to your 887, that Department's L27 of January 9 had in mind indirect influence of Swiss consular officials exercised by their presence near places where Jews are concentrated and such informal conversations which they could hold on the spot rather than official acts of intercession.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 399.

9:00 a.m.
February 12, 1945

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y), Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel, McCormack, O'Dwyer, Files

Bakzin:ar 2/9/45

Ra

000623

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

1945 FEB 8 AM 10 10

*was referred
file*

AS-377
Distribution of true copy of telegram
reading only by special arrangement. ~~(S-377)~~ (BOOK)
BERR
Dated February 8, 1945

Rec'd 6:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

CONTROL COPY

^x
887, February 8, 4 p.m.

FOR DEPARTMENT AND WRB

On occasion of my talk with Minister Tuck
along lines of Department's 127, January 9 (WRB'S
356), I left an aide memoire with him on the subject
(Legation's 581, January 27).

* Legation has now received a written answer to
this aide memoire from Federal Political Department,
Division of Foreign Affairs, dated February 5 stating
with reference to protective value of frequent visits
by Swiss consular officials to places where Jews are
concentrated that this matter is being studied by
Swiss Legation at Berlin with a view to determining
lines along which action can most profitably be taken.

Swiss aide memoire goes on to state "it must be
emphasized, however, that the situation is not the
same as in Hungary for in Germany Swiss intercession
in favor of Jews has up to now only been countenanced

with respect

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

RECEIVED
FEB 10 1945
TELEGRAM SECTION
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

000626

-2-#887, February 8, 4 p.m., from Bern

with respect to limited categories (as far as numbers are concerned) of beneficiaries of immigration permits for Palestine or the USA and of possessors of protection documents of South American states and that only insofar as such persons were being considered for exchanges". End Swiss aide memoire.

HUDDLE

LMS

000627

Cable with Switz.
DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TELEGRAM
DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

LFR-188
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET)

Bern
Dated February 8, 1945
Rec'd 10:38 a.m.
Man Ref. Ref. P.H.L.

Secretary of State
Washington.

^x
869, February 8, 10 a.m.
FOR WRB FROM MCCLELLAND.

CONTROL COPY

On January 25 Legation sent a note to Federal Political Department asking if Government of Switzerland would be willing to renew its approaches to German Government with view to obtaining release and evacuation from former Austrian territory to Switzerland of 12,000 or more Jewish deportees from Hungary. Swiss were asked to take this initiative since evacuation of approximately 12,000 Jews holding Palestine certificates and Swedish protective documents from Budapest to which both German and Hungarian authorities had previously agreed had proved impossible due to military developments.

A copy of this note was forwarded to WRB via pouch on January 27.

Under date of February 3 we received following reply from Federal Political Department, Division of Foreign Affairs: "Political Department thanks Legation for its communication of which it has taken note with the greatest interest. State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

DECLASSIFIED
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972 In the

000628

-2- #869, February 8, 10 a.m., from Bern

In the spirit of Switzerland's humanitarian tra-
ditions the department is devoting to this question
attention it deserves. In agreement therefore with
Swiss Legation at Berlin it will carefully examine what
representations could be undertaken in order to attain
goal envisaged by American authorities." End of
Political Department's note.

HUDDLE

BB

000629

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INCOMING TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF CENTRAL SERVICES TELEGRAPH SECTION

MES-312

Distribution of true reading only by special arrangement.

1945 FEB 8 AM 10 29 Bern

Dated February 8, 1945

Rec'd. 4:45 p.m.

RECEIVED IN AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE (LIAISON)

Handwritten signature

Secretary of State
Washington,

885, February 8, 2 p.m.

FOR DEPARTMENT AND WRB:

CONTROL COPY

Based on your 338, January 20, WRB's 373 a note was sent to Federal Political Department on January 25 indicating clearly that our Government would welcome an appeal by Government of Switzerland addressed to German Government in behalf of Jews remaining in Germany controlled areas.

Legation is now in receipt of an answer from the Swiss dated February 6 stating that "The federal authorities did not fail to contact without delay the Swiss Legation at Berlin with a view to examining the means of taking action along the desired lines." END OF SWISS ANSWER.

I had previously discussed this general question in the light of Department's 127, January 9 with Minister Stucki on January 15 as reported in Legation's 581, January 27.

HUDDLE

DU

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

For security reasons the text of this message must be kept secret.

000630

CABLE TO HUDDLE AND MCGLELLAND, BERN, FROM DEPARTMENT AND WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Today's New York Times reports the arrival in Switzerland of 1200 refugees from Theresienstadt and suggests that other substantial movements are to follow. Consideration has been given here to possibility that in view of present conditions of increasing overcrowding in Germany resulting from the flow of refugees into Germany from the east, the German authorities may, as a result of this pressure, present increasing numbers of refugees at the Swiss border for admission. 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. If, however, the flow becomes substantial, Switzerland may request both supplies and assistance in removing from Switzerland corresponding numbers of refugees already there. Kindly advise whether in your judgment the foregoing developments appear to be an imminent possibility and if so, consider the wisdom of discussing the situation with Currie.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 394.

2:30 p.m.
February 8, 1945

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y), Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel,
McCormack, O'Dwyer, Files

File
Copied by
Paul Dyer of conference with
Warren
Warren,hd 2/8/45 Geo. Warren

100632

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMERICAN LEGATION, BERN,
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: January 27, 1945
NUMBER: 581 X

The following is for WRB.

The substance of WRB's message 356 has been brought to the attention of all competent authorities of Federal Political Department and ICRC and discussed with them earnestly. See Department's 127 of the ninth of January. On the fifteenth of January, I took the matter up with Minister Walter Stucki at this time in charge of Foreign Office awaiting assumption of duty of the Foreign Minister (newly appointed). Have approached Petit Pierre, and officials of Foreign Interests Division. It is said by the Foreign Office that official Swiss representatives have thus far not been able to visit any of the three camps names Viz-Vienna, Lodz, Thereisienstadt. In addition, it feels that there is considerable doubt of possibility of its representative making frequent or extended visits to locations where Jews are concentrated unless it can be satisfactorily established that persons are there who legally fall under protection of Swiss. However, it is stated by the Swiss that every attempt will be made in regard to this and they think that camps near Vienna likely offer most favorable prospects as in that vicinity there are numerous Swiss interests. The Swiss will attempt to take complete advantage for purposes indicated by you.

When interviewed on the matter by McClelland, President Burckhardt ICRC assured him that committee purposed continue doing all in its power to aid in every possible manner Jews and other surviving victims Nazi persecution still in hands of Germans. Therefore, ICRC is endeavoring to enlarge the number of its delegates in Germany. It was urged by McClelland that ICRC continue this effort as the more competent and energetic men on spot as internal confusion increases in Germany the greater will be chance of influencing officials of Germany and possibly dissuading them from carrying out policies of extermination.

Shortly ICRC will report on extent of supervision which it has been able to exercise over Hungarian Jewish deportees working in territory of Reich. Especially in the last six weeks this supervision has been fairly satisfactory in Austria but is probably less extensive within Germany.

DC/L:MLG
1-29-45

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Ackermann, Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Gaston, Hodol, McCormack, O'Byer, Files

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

000633

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

**INCOMING
TELEGRAM**
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

*War Dept
File*

EGP-760

1945 JAN 29 AM 9 36

Distribution of true reading only by special arrangement. Dated January 27, 1945

COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS (LIAISON) 8:43 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

CONTROL COPY

592, January 27, 2 p.m.

WRB FROM MCCLELLAND

To best of my knowledge report given to board by Vaad Hahatzala is incorrect. Department's 410, January 25, WRB's 378. From what source did such information come? If any such situation existed I should most certainly have heard of it and would naturally have reported it to board.

HUDDLE

JMS

For security reasons the contents of this message must be kept secret.

*1/30/45
Advised Vaad Hahatzala
E.H.*

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-78
By R. H. Parks Date **SEP 13 1972**

000634

... (Switz)

Misc.
for Foreign Funds (material for C. Currie)

At the beginning of 1944, civilian refugees in Switzerland from enemy persecution numbered around 53,000, of which 22,000 were Jews. The principal groups among them were:

- 9720 former Germans and Austrians (almost all stateless; 85% Jews)
- 6700 former Poles (majority stateless; 85% Jews)
- 500 former Czechs (stateless; Jews)
- 200 former Hungarians (stateless; Jews)
- 500 stateless persons of various former nationalities)
- 9800 Italians
- 5332 French
- 1295 Dutch
- 1200 Yugoslavs
- 580 Belgians
- 480 Hungarians
- 500 Czechs
- 5000 of various nationalities

In the course of 1944 there arrived in Switzerland some 13,000 French and Italian refugee children, about 1,600 Jewish refugees (largely Hungarian) from the camp of Belzenbergen, and an unspecified number of Jewish and other refugees from Axis territory. The total of refugees now in Switzerland can therefore be estimated at about 70,000. This figure does not include about 30,000 military internees (20,000 Italians; 10,000 Poles).

A majority of these refugees is placed in special camps under the jurisdiction of the Swiss government, where they are maintained by the Swiss government, private relief organizations, and certain governments-in-exile. Others are at liberty, with their living expenses financed either out of their own resources or out of the resources of various charitable organizations. American relief organizations play an important part in financing the maintenance of refugees in Switzerland and the following sums have been transmitted by the principal American organizations to Switzerland for this purpose:

- JDC
- Friends
- Unitarians
- WJC
- Labor Committee
- Christian Refugees
- Intellectual Refugees
- Self-Help
- Vaad Habasala

In addition, large sums have been sent under Treasury licenses by individuals in the United States to their relatives who found refuge in Switzerland. All these amounts have remained, to a very large extent, part of the national capital of Switzerland, thereby permanently enriching the Swiss people.

1/20/45

11063

Upon the coming into being of the War Refugee Board, it received reports that Swiss border authorities were rather strict in interpreting the term "political refugees" admissible into Switzerland, as applied to Jews trying to escape from France (then under German occupation). The Board thereupon drew the attention of the Swiss government to the fact that, in view of the anti-Jewish measures practiced by the Axis, all Jews escaping Axis territory should be regarded as political refugees and therefore accorded refuge in Switzerland.

In its endeavor to induce the Swiss government to continue to grant admission to all refugees from Axis persecution, the Board, beginning March 18, 1944, repeatedly gave assurances to the Swiss government to the effect that this Government would guarantee the maintenance, provision of supplies for, and ultimate evacuation of victims of enemy persecution who would be admitted to Switzerland.

No demands were formulated by the Swiss authorities regarding either maintenance of or provision of supplies for refugees. An unofficial request was made in the course of December 1944 that a group of about 1600 refugees recently arrived from camp Belzenbergen (near Hanover, Germany) be evacuated. Measures to that effect have been taken by the Board, and SHAEF has been advised by the War Department to cooperate in the transportation of these refugees across France.

The anticipated period of intensified anti-Jewish terror, coupled with the increasing confusion among local German officials, renders the further influx of Jewish refugees from Austria and Southern Germany into Switzerland both important and likely, and requests have been recently addressed to Switzerland to admit all such refugees without restrictions as to numbers.

A second important function performed by Switzerland in this respect is the protection of various groups of victims of Axis persecution still in Axis territory. As has been proven in the case of Budapest, the presence and active interest of Swiss diplomatic and consular personnel on the spot can accomplish a lot to prevent ruthless extermination; and Swiss authorities have been urged, therefore, to increase and spread their personnel in enemy-held territory with a view to achieving this aim.

More particularly, Switzerland, as the protective power for the United States and most of the Latin-American countries, may take particular care of a few thousand Jews who are only kept alive because of their claim (however substantial or otherwise) to the nationality of an American republic. In this respect, it is essential that Swiss officials, both in Bern and on the spot, interpret their role as protective power as broadly as possible and resolve every doubt in favor of the person who, otherwise, would become a victim of a ruthless extermination policy.

An important part in keeping victims of enemy persecution alive can be played by The International Committee of the Red Cross, with headquarters in Geneva. By forwarding and supervising the distribution of parcels to such victims in their camps, the Red Cross can not only provide more supplies to the most undernourished, worst housed, and worst clad group of people in Axis territory, but can also exercise, through the presence of their personnel, a most valuable restraining influence on German officials in the places where brutal killings are known to be going on on a gigantic scale.

BAkzin:ro 1/26/45 *BG*

7 0 0 6 3 7



LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL
[REDACTED]

Bern, January 25, 1945.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I have pleasure in enclosing for the Board's information a copy of a note which we submitted today to the Swiss Federal Political Department at Bern. It contains a request to the Swiss Government which might have a certain chance of success if the increasingly difficult transportation problem could ever be solved.

I shall naturally keep you informed concerning the results of this undertaking.

Very sincerely yours,

Roswell D. McClelland

Roswell D. McClelland
Special Assistant to
the American Minister.

Enclosure: Copy of Legation's Note No. 1874,
of January 25, 1945 to the Swiss
Federal Political Department.

John W. Pehle, Esquire

Executive Director,

War Refugee Board,

Washington 25, D. C.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

000630

Copy for ARB, Washington.

No. 1874

The Legation of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Federal Political Department and refers with gratification to the Division of Foreign Interests' kind notice of December 16, 1944 (S. 55.45.28. A. - VI.) relative to the representations undertaken by the Swiss Legation at Berlin with the German Government on behalf of persecuted Jews. The Legation has particularly in mind the repeated and generous efforts of the Government of Switzerland to arrange for the exit from Hungary to temporary asylum on Swiss territory of various categories of Jews to whose departure both the German and Hungarian authorities had consented toward the end of October 1944. Despite repeated intercession by the Government of Switzerland with the Governments of Hungary and Germany it unfortunately proved impossible, due to developments in the military situation, for the Jews involved - approximately 8,000 holders of Palestine certificates and 4,500 holders of Swedish protective documents - to reach Switzerland.

In connection with Minister Fröhlicher's representations referred to above and in view of the

unsuccessful

000539

unsuccessful outcome of the attempt to evacuate persecuted Jews from Budapest, the Legation would be greatly appreciative to learn whether the Government of Switzerland would be willing to renew its approach to the German Government, suggesting that action along the following lines might be fruitful.

Since the military developments have prevented the departure from Budapest of the various categories of Jews which had been authorized by the German Government, would it be considered feasible for the Government of Switzerland to request that the German Government permit the departure of an equal or larger number of Jewish refugees of Hungarian or other nationality now located on former Austrian territory? The Legation has trustworthy information that some 17,000 Jews deported from Hungary in June of 1944, are at present in various types of camps under German authority on former Austrian territory.

It is the Legation's feeling that such representations might have greater chance of success if limited to elderly persons, women and children, that is to those categories of deportees which the Germans are not using as labor.

The Legation of the United States renews its assurance that all such Jewish refugees admitted

to

000640

to Switzerland will be evacuated as promptly as possible and that expenses incurred for their temporary stay in Switzerland will be reimbursed should the Federal Government so desire.

The Legation avails itself of this occasion to renew to the Federal Political Department the assurance of its high consideration.

Bern, January 25, 1945.

000641

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

**INCOMING
TELEGRAM**
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

*awar Ref 2d.
p. file*

LF-137
Distribution of true reading only by special arrangement. (SECRET)
1945 JAN 26 PM 2 10
Bern
Dated January 25, 1945

COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS
(LIAISON)
Dated 9:45 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

CONTROL COPY

830
~~531~~, January 25, 3 p.m.
X
FOR WRB FROM MCGLELLAND

be closely & promptly

In course of constant contact with various officials and agencies of Swiss Government during past many months on subject of admission to Switzerland of refugees from Nazi persecution, (Department's 240, January 16, WRB's 364) we have observed no lack of willingness on part of Swiss to grant large numbers of such persons temporary asylum. On contrary Swiss have repeatedly interceded with Germans as in case of projected evacuation of upwards of 12,000 Jews from Budapest in effort to expedite and organize such evacuation.

On occasion of coming of second Bergen-Belsen convoy of 1300 individuals in early December Federal police was somewhat disturbed over unannounced arrival of group of unknown persons of this size from Germany on understandable grounds of military and internal security.

We have

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

000642

-2-#531, January 25, 3 p.m. from Bern

We have repeatedly conveyed to Swiss our Government's assurance that any such refugees admitted to Switzerland would be evacuated as promptly as possible. Although Swiss have not as yet chosen to avail themselves of our offers of maintenance they took occasion in course of recent discussions relative to conversion of dollar equivalent of the 20,000,000 into Swiss francs to express informally their distress at United States unwillingness to allow them import into Switzerland even from Spain some 300,000 tons of food stuffs purchased for general Swiss consumption and warehoused in Spain for past many months. Our lack of understanding (as they interpret it) of growing difficulties their food situation and our simultaneous requests that they admit large numbers of new refugees contrast rather unfavorably in their minds. It is worth noting in this respect that Switzerland has recently received a new contingent of close to 10,000 French refugee children from the Muhlhouse region.

HUDDLE

MJF

700643

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OUTGOING TELEGRAM
DIVISION OF CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

1945 JAN 27 AM 10 39

COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS (LIAISON)

quar...
re...

AMLEGATION

BERN

410

CONTROL COPY

The following for Huddle and McClelland from Department and War Refugee Board is WRB 378.

Vaad Mahatzala advised WRB of receipt of a report that two groups of Hungarian Jews numbering 7,000 and 18,000 respectively await entry into Switzerland and that their rescue depends on assurance of admission into Switzerland. Please advise Board whether this is correct. If so, it is assumed, of course, that you will take all appropriate steps to obtain their admission into Switzerland in accordance with Department's 240 of January 16.

GREW
(Acting)
(GLW)

For security reasons the text of this message must be closely guarded.

WRB:MMV:KQ
1/24/45

WE

SE

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

000644

CABLE TO MR. HUDDLE AND MR. MCCLELLAND, BERN, SWITZERLAND, FROM DEPARTMENT AND WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Vand Hahatzala advised WRB of receipt of a report that two groups of Hungarian Jews numbering 7,000 and 15,000 respectively await entry into Switzerland and that their rescue depends on assurance of admission into Switzerland. Please advise Board whether this is correct. If so, it is assumed, of course, that you will take all appropriate steps to obtain their admission into Switzerland in accordance with Department's 240 of January 16.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 378.

12:30
January 24, 1945

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Ackermann, Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel, Marks, McCormack, Pehle, Files.

BAKzin:ar 1/24/45

Ba Jot -

000645

WU1 DL PD

WUX NEWYORK NY JAN 21 1945 239P

HON JOHN W PEHLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD 1945 JAN 22 AM 8 23

TREASURY BLDG

RECEIVED REPORT ONE GROUP 7,000 AND ONE GROUP ABOUT
15,000 HUNGARIAN JEWS AWAIT ENTRY INTO SWITZERLAND
STOP RESCUE DEPENDS ON ASSURANCE OF ENTRY INTO SWITZERLAND
STOP RESPECTFULLY URGE YOU UTILIZE IMMEDIATELY GOOD
OFFICES OF OUR GOVERNMENT TO INTERVENE WITH SWISS
GOVERNMENT FOR ENTRY OF THESE PERSONS
VAAD HAHATZALA EMERGENCY COMMITTEE.

806AM JAN 22.

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000646

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

IFR
Distribution of true
message only by special
arrangement. (W)

January 16, 1945

4 p.m.

quarantined
file
CONTROL COPY

AMLEGATION

BERN

240

The following for McClelland is WRB 364.

For security reasons the
text of this message must
be classified as "Secret"

Doubts have been expressed by certain private relief agencies in America, hopeful of being able to arrange large-scale escape of refugees from Nazi persecution, whether Swiss Government is willing to keep its doors open to a further flow of such refugees, whatever their numbers. Please investigate, if necessary, and advise us. Should you believe it useful now or at any future time, you are authorized to emphasize to Swiss officials that the previous assurances given by this Government concerning the maintenance and evacuation of refugees from enemy persecution who would be admitted to Switzerland were not (repeat not) restricted to any particular number of persons and that this Government would deeply appreciate continued Swiss cooperation in this humanitarian endeavor by admitting all such refugees who may be able to reach Switzerland, without regard to numbers.

WRB:MMV:RG
1/16/45

WE

GREW
(Acting)
(GLW)

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

000647

CABLE TO AMLEGATION BERN, SWITZERLAND, FOR MCCLELLAND

Doubts have been expressed by certain private relief agencies in America, hopeful of being able to arrange large-scale escape of refugees from Nazi persecution, whether Swiss Government is willing to keep its doors open to a further flow of such refugees, whatever their numbers. Please investigate, if necessary, and advise us.

Should you believe it useful now or at any future time, you are authorized to emphasize to Swiss officials that the previous assurances given by this Government concerning the maintenance and evacuation of refugees from enemy persecution who would be admitted to Switzerland were not (repeat not) restricted to any particular number of persons and that this Government would deeply appreciate continued Swiss cooperation in this humanitarian endeavor by admitting all such refugees who may be able to reach Switzerland, without regard to numbers.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 364.

12:45 p.m.
January 15, 1945

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Ackermann, Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel, Marks, McCormack, Pehle, Files

BAKzin:ar 1/13/45

*RA closed with
Mrs. Pehle. JH —*

000648

*See cable 12
affair
of Sweden*

JERUSALEM DECEMBER 26

RABBI ABRAHAM KALMANOWITZ
540 BEDFORD AVE BROOKLYN NEW YORK

CHIEF RABBI ISAAC HERZOG JERUSALEM RECEIVED MESSAGE SWEDISH
GOVERNMENT MADE REPRESENTATIONS JAPAN INFORMED SCHEME REMOVING
FROM SHANGHAI IMPOSSIBLE MESSAGE FROM VATICAN JAPANESE GOVERNMENT
AGREE ONLY UNDER EXCHANGE SCHEME INTEREST YOURSELF POSSIBILITY
LARGE SCALE EXCHANGE LARGE NUMBER STUDENTS SICK

RABBI ELIEZER FINKEL

000649

May we respectfully submit to the State Department the following vital matters for the consideration of the Department and for the necessary action which we petition herewith:

I. Switzerland - During the past year our Emergency Committee, through its rescue committee in Switzerland, has received the fullest cooperation of the Swiss Government in the admission of the refugees, who through the aid of our Committees, were fortunate enough to be rescued from the hands of the enemy and given haven in Switzerland. Switzerland has manifested on every occasion its great humane and democratic ideals and has kept its doors open to these refugees. We understand that the country, as small as it is, already holds close to 100,000 such refugees. We can readily appreciate and understand the burden that is imposed upon this country. We would therefore respectfully request:

- a) that the Government of the United States together with the other Allied Nations take immediate steps to arrange for the removal from Switzerland of the maximum number of these refugees and the placing of them into a temporary camp until their permanent re-establishment. This would clearly emphasize to the Government of Switzerland that the refugees are being provided for and would give the Swiss Government the added impetus to continue to keep its doors open to the many who can still be rescued. In conjunction with the removal of these refugees we would respectfully suggest that provision be made for the admission of food, clothing and medicaments to those already there to relieve the situation which has been imposed upon Switzerland by the admission of these refugees.
- b) We would also respectfully request that the U.S. and other Allied Nations intervene with the

*Switzerland
Emergency Committee
with reference to*

700650

with the Government of Switzerland to continue to keep its doors open. The success of all present and future rescue measures involving hundreds of thousands of lives, is entirely and directly dependent on the certainty that the admission of those rescued, will be assured. The action which Switzerland has taken heretofore in the admission of refugees was done so at the suggestion of the government of the United States.

II. We have been advised that exchange is imminent between the Governments of Paraguay and Germany. We would therefore respectively again call the attention of the State Department to the two groups of persons formerly held in Camp Vitell, France. One group of 163 was deported in April 1944 and the second group of 51 in May 1944. These 214 persons include many great rabbis, scholars and leaders and their fate is of great concern to us. So much so that we have made several interventions with the State Department concerning them. We anxiously fear for their safety.

Inasmuch as most of these persons possess Paraguayan documentation with particular validity for exchange, we would respectively request our State Department which has evidenced such deep concern in the fate of this group to make every effort to discover their whereabouts and to have them exchanged.

III. Delegation to Switzerland - We would respectfully request the assistance of the State Department in the matter of enabling our organization to send a delegate to Switzerland that it may work in closest harmony with our existing Rescue Committee therein and assist that Committee in strengthening and expanding the rescue work and program which the committee has outlined for the future. This delegate would of course report to the Representative of the War Refugee Board in Switzerland and would parallel and coordinate his work and program with that of the Refugee Board representative. In this manner we feel that a closer contact would be estab-

440651

lished between our Committee here and the committee operating in Switzerland which would agree with the ~~USSR~~ ^{USSR} program respectively request
IV. Delegation to Poland - We would respectfully request

the good offices of our State Department for an intervention with the Government of the USSR, to permit and enable the entry of a delegation of our Committee into free Poland. This committee would have as its main purpose:-

- a) to discover and trace the whereabouts of the many thousands of great Rabbis and leaders of the religious communities which existed prior to the war in Poland.
- b) To endeavor to reunite uprooted and war-torn families
- c) To assist in the problem of giving relief to the many hundreds of thousands of persons who are in dire need of such a relief program.

V. We would also respectfully request the State Department to intercede with the Government of the USSR for the release of the Rabbis and Rabbinical Scholars who are now in the USSR in the provinces of: Turkestan, Bukhara etc. These scholars and rabbis are formerly in the great Yeshiva of Poland and in the religious communities of that country. They represent an element most vitally necessary for the future religious life of the Jewish people and we are most anxious to arrange for their release from the USSR via Iran. This matter has been presented on several occasions to the State Department and has been taken up by the Ambassador of our country to the Government of Russia.

VI. Shanghai - On several occasions we have presented to the State Department memoranda concerning the release of the group of Rabbis and ~~Yeshiva~~ ^{Rabbinical} scholars in Shanghai. This group comprises some 500 persons in which is included in entirety the Rabbinical Collage of Mir, one of the most outstanding rabbinical schools in Poland. We have interceded with the Vatican, the Government of Spain and the Government of Sweden for the unilateral release of this group from Japan and also for their inclusion in whatever exchanges there are to be made. We stressed to the Vatican and to the Government of Sweden and Spain the outstanding and exceptional religious status of

000652

this group and requested that they be specially considered in ^{were} the matter of exchange or release. We recently informed that the Japanese Government was ready to consider the exchange of these persons. We would therefore respectfully request our State Department to give immediate consideration to the matter of their exchange and to express a willingness to the Government of Japan that our country was ready to consider the exchange of these persons.

VII. Our organization has worked in closest harmony with the War Refugee Board and clearly recognizes the tremendous task which faced the War Refugee Board during 1944 in carrying out the Executive Order of our President which created the Board with the express purpose of making possible the rescue of the maximum number of the Hitler victims and enable their escape to safe territory. Our Committee expended over \$ 1,100,000 which it made available under Government license to committees which operated in the European theatre. Thousands of persons owe their lives to the functioning of the War Refugee Board and the closest harmony with which our committee worked with the Board in Switzerland.

We would therefore respectfully urge that the province of the War Refugee Board be expanded and that it be given greater means to effectively carry out its humane program. It has been proven that rescue can be effected by the judicious use of larger sums of money. We feel therefore that larger sums should be placed at the disposal of the War Refugee Board to be use for the rescue of unfortunate victims. It becomes apparent as time passes that literally only days remain that can still be utilized for the rescue of as many victims as possible who may still be snatchend from the hands of the enemy. We are certain that it is the desire and will of our State Department to make possible this rescue work.

Respectfully Submitted

January 10, 1946

Robbi A. Kalmanowitz

VAAD HATZALA EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

132 W. 4th St. N.Y.C.

100653

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (SECRET W)

OUTGOING TELEGRAM January 11, 1945 5 p.m.

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

AMLEGATION

JAN 11 1945

BERN

127 X

The following for Huddle and McClelland is WRB 366.

In view of well-known German practice of exterminating Jews surviving in any area previous to its evacuation, Department and WRB consider it necessary once more to draw attention of Swiss and Interross authorities to the danger faced by the Jewish survivors in German-controlled territory.

Accordingly, it will be appreciated if you will newly appointed Foreign Minister and President of Interross, and urge that continued efforts be made from now on to keep the surviving victims of Nazi persecution alive during the coming stages of hostilities in Europe. You should specifically mention in this connection the three largest concentrations of Jews in Axis territory known to exist, viz. Lodz with 80,000 to 80,000 inmates, Theresienstadt with 40,000 to 60,000 inmates, and camps near Vienna with 18,000 inmates, and you should also mention any other localities or regions where Jews are believed by you to survive.

In your conferences with Swiss Foreign Minister and Interross President it should be made clear that this Government considers that frequent and extended visits of Swiss Consuls and Interross delegates to places and regions where Jews are concentrated constitute one of the most effective means of preventing their further extermination.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

Text of this message may be seen in the file of the Department of State

700654

-2-#127, January 9, 1945, 5 p.m. to Bern.

extermination. This method proved its efficacy in Budapest where, thanks to the presence of Swiss and Intercross personnel, many lives appear to have been saved.

Furthermore, you should emphasize to Foreign Minister and Intercross President the mounting evidence of confusion among local German officials and their increasing accessibility to psychological pressure seeking to dissuade them from executing extermination policies ordered by certain German authorities, and urge that full advantage be taken of this state of mind in the interest of saving lives, through unofficial as well as official channels.

More particularly, in view of German consent to permit Intercross inspection and care for Hungarian Jews engaged in forced labor in Germany and German-occupied territory (enclosure 1 to your despatch 10132 of December 6), please request immediate and continuing Intercross action to safeguard lives of this largest group of Jews surviving under German rule.

Please endeavor to make clear to Swiss and Intercross that the activities suggested above should be actively pursued as long as the danger continues.

Please advise Department and WRB of Swiss and Intercross reaction.
The

700655

-3-#127, January 9, 1945, 5 p.m. to Bern.

The following from WRB for McClelland:

It would be helpful if you inquired at frequent intervals what specific action Swiss and Intercross are taking to carry out the above suggestions.

In view of the situation as outlined above and in view of your recent reports indicating effectiveness of publicity and other forms of psychological pressure upon German officials, you are requested to make special efforts through all channels available to you to increase such pressure with a view to safeguarding the lives of the surviving victims of Nazi persecution.

STETTINIUS
(GHW)

WRB:MMV;KG
1/8/48

WE

SWP

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DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

EAS-428

1944 NOV 25 PM 5 33

PLAIN

Bern

Undated

Rec'd : November 25, 1944
8:47 a.m.

W. A. Rief
B. M. P. (P. Sch)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

CONTROL COPY

7740

FOR WRB FROM MCCLELLAND

Reference second paragraph WRB'S 264, there are in Switzerland as of November 1 some 42,000 civilian emigrants (those who entered country prior to August 1, 1942) and refugees (those who entered mainly illegally after that date) exclusive of military internees numbering roughly 40,000 (two main groups being 20,000 Italians and 10,000 Poles). In addition to these two principal categories there are some 13,000 recently admitted French and Italian refugee children from Belfort region and Val Dossola respectively total therefore about 95,000.

Civilian emigrants and refugees are made up of following major groups: 9720 former Germans, and Austrians (almost all stateless) 6700 Poles (majority

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NOV 25 1944
STATE DEPT

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-2- #7740, Undated, from Bern

stateless). 85 percent of these two groups are Jews in addition there are about 500 former Czechs and 200 former Hungarians who are Jewish and stateless another 500 persons of various ex-nationalities should be added to this category of largely unrepatriables then come following repatriable groups possessing nationalities; 9800 Italians 5332 French (including Alsatians) 1295 Dutch 1200 Yugoslavs (80 percent Jews) 580 Belgians 480 Hungarians 500 Czechs plus about 5,000 of various other nationalities.

About 230 persons at present in Switzerland hold valid Palestine certificates of which 1,000 more will shortly be allotted to Switzerland mainly for children and adolescents.

Only negligible number of isolated cases possess valid visas for overseas emigration mainly South America.

HUDDLE

RR

000650

I was Rep. Ch. Keller

*copy with
2/2/44*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: November 8, 1944
NUMBER: 3810

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Reference is made herewith to your cables of October 18 and 20, nos. 6902 and 6960 respectively.

Should Venta Sanatorium or similar quarters be rented, The Swiss should arrange that there be given refuge therein Jews of United States nationality and their accompanying relatives, whether Americans or aliens. If such facilities have not been rented, the Swiss should see that United States Jews and their families are sheltered in quarters where all the rights to which they are entitled can be given them.

We have taken telegraph action.

STETTINIUS
(ACTING)

SWP:EJD:MA

Paraphrase DCR:VAG 11/11/44

CONTROL COPY

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RECEIVED
NOV 11 1944

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

000659

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: November 7, 1944
NUMBER: 43786

To Minister Harrison and McClelland, Bern.

Reference your 7269 of November 1.

Please transmit to Swiss Government this Government's appreciation of Swiss action reported therein. You may assure Swiss officials that this Government will do everything possible to assist them in every way in connection with the reception and evacuation of the contemplated refugees from Hungary.

In this connection, please ascertain and advise the Board of total number of refugees now in Switzerland, and of the numbers holding (1) Palestine certificates, (2) valid visas to any other countries, or (3) valid passports of countries to which they can safely return.

This is WRB Bern cable No. 264.

STETTINIUS
ACTING

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Ackermann, Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Lesser, Marks, Mannon, McCormack, Pehle, Files.

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

000660

2 Nov Def Bd
(Mr. Beale)

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: October 23, 1944
NUMBER: 3607

CONTROL COPY

FOR MCCLELLAND FROM PEHLE.

For your information the Swiss Minister in Washington recently asked the Board how his government could be of any help in the serious Jewish situation in Hungary and at Oswiecim and Birkeneau. He was advised confidentially of the steps which have been taken by the Swedes. He has promised to notify his government of this and to suggest to the Swiss Government that it take action parallel to that taken by the Swedes.

Please support this matter to the extent possible.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 230.
X

STETTINIUS
(Acting)

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

000661

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON, BERN, FOR MCGLELLAND FROM PEHLE

For your information the Swiss Minister in Washington recently asked the Board how his government could be of any help in the serious Jewish situation in Hungary and at Oswiecim and Birkeneau. He was advised confidentially of the steps which have been taken by the Swedes. He has promised to notify his government of this and to suggest to the Swiss Government that it take action parallel to that taken by the Swedes.

Please support this matter to the extent possible.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 230.

3:45 p.m.
October 20, 1944

2A Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel,
Lesser, Mannon, McCormack, Files
FHhd 10/20/44

October 19, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

Mr. Bruggmann, the Swiss Minister to the United States, called Mr. Pehle today in connection with a request the Minister received from the World Jewish Congress to do something for the Jews in Hungary, Slovakia and in the concentration camps at Oswiecim and Birkeneau. He stated that Dr. Kubowitzki of the World Jewish Congress had advised him of certain actions which the Swedish Government had taken, particularly in Hungary, and he asked Mr. Pehle for confirmation of this information. Mr. Pehle advised Mr. Bruggmann of the action taken by the Swedes to protect several thousand Hungarian Jews and also advised the Minister that the Swedes had sent a Special Representative attached to the Swedish Legation to work on this problem. Mr. Pehle also advised the Swiss Minister that word had been received in this country that the Germans had intended to exterminate all the refugees now in the camps at Oswiecim and Birkeneau and that Mr. Hull had issued a statement last week on this matter. Mr. Pehle also advised the Swiss Minister that the situation with respect to the Jews in Slovakia was extremely critical.

The Swiss Minister stated to Mr. Pehle that he would immediately cable his government and ask them to get in touch with the Swedes with a view to taking parallel action to that already taken by the Swedish Government to help the doomed Jews in Hungary, Slovakia and Silesia.



F. Hodel

700663

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

LFG-623

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (~~RESTRICTED~~)

Bern

Dated September 13, 1944

Rec'd 5:43 p.m.

CONTROL COPY

Secretary of State,

Washington.

6050, September 13, 1 p.m.

Department's 3001, August 31.

Consensus of opinion among private Swiss Relief Committee members consulted is that effectiveness of Swiss Refugee Advisory Commission in coordinating and implementing work of various organizations handling refugee matters in Switzerland has been very limited. It has had little effect either favorable or unfavorable on normal activities of different groups active in refugee questions here.

The private Swiss relief organizations continue to meet regularly under aegis of Zentralstelle für Flüchtlingshilfe in Zurich and carry on their activities very much as before. It is generally felt that setting up of advisory commission was due to personal desire of Federal Councilor Lorvon Steiger Chief of Department of Justice and Police, to lessen his own share of responsibility for handling of refugee problems in Switzerland and attenuate criticism directed particularly at

him

000664

-2- #6038, September 13, 1 p.m., from Bern

him.

Although announced that commission would convene at least once a month, February 23 meeting (Legation's 1130, February 24) has remained one and only full session to date. Several of its sub-committees have met. Sub-committee on legal questions has been fairly active and settled cases of disciplinary action taken by Swiss authorities against individual refugees. Sub-committee on emigration and repatriation had single meeting in July but took no action worth noting. In sub-committee on recreation and education official Swiss members, i.e. officials of Federal Department of Justice and Police proposed series of lectures in camps on Switzerland. Private members suggested instead lectures on post war Europe emigration and the like as subjects of special interest to refugees at this moment but which had hitherto been forbidden by Swiss authorities as contrary to Swiss neutrality. This minor matter still being considered by authorities.

HARRISON

JMS

000665

September 12, 1944

Mr. White

Mr. Gafrow

Subject: Proposed Swiss tax on persons returning to Switzerland after the war.

The attached translation of an article in the *NEUE ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG* indicates that a measure has been submitted in the legislature of the Canton of Zurich to impose a special tax on returning residents who left Switzerland during the war. The purpose of the measure is to discourage the repatriation of those who sought personal safety abroad and escaped the hardships of living under war conditions. The tax would hit mostly the Swiss Jews who constitute by far the greater part of those who left Switzerland. It would not apply to those Swiss who went abroad "to represent Swiss cultural and economic interests." To escape the tax, the persons affected would have to renounce the right to reestablish a domicile in Switzerland after the war. The author of the measure admits that in the event of a Nazi invasion of Switzerland, the dangers would have been greater for Jews than for non-Jews. He contends, however, that this is only a difference in degree which the proposed law cannot take into consideration.

Comment

In view of the atrocities to which Jews of all nationalities have been subjected in occupied countries, the argument that the difference in this respect between Swiss Jews and non-Jews is merely one of degree is absurd, to say the least. Like the Jews of the Netherlands or Hungary or other occupied areas, the Swiss Jews would have been doomed to extermination or, at best, slavery. The Swiss military authorities were fully aware of this and therefore, despite the military mobilization since September 1939, readily granted military furloughs to Jews in order to enable them to emigrate.

That the situation in Switzerland was precarious is evidenced by the fact that various Swiss firms sought refuge in the United States and that the Swiss National Bank transferred its gold stocks to this country for safety. If the purpose of the measure, as its author contends, is to equalize the burdens of the war emergency, it would seem that it should apply also to such firms.

700666

I mentioned the proposed tax to Professor Foerster when he was here recently. He told me that he was acquainted with the matter and that his organization in New York had protested to the Swiss Minister in Washington. Foerster stated that Dr. Bruggmann was of the opinion that the measure would never be enacted into law. This, however, is only Dr. Bruggmann's personal opinion.

The proposal to tax so-called undesirable repatriates undoubtedly reflects popular thinking on this point in Switzerland now that Allied victory is in sight.

WVO:ngb
9/12/44

101661

Translation
from
DEUTSCHER ZÜRCHER ZEITUNG
No. 1235 of July 20, 1944

TAXATION OF UNWELCOME RETURNING EMIGRANTS

I

The proposal to impose a special tax upon all who at the beginning of the war took refuge abroad upon their return after the war has met with wide interest after having been explained in the Zuerich Cantonal Council. In the press of German Switzerland, even in the Welsh and Tessin newspapers, this motion was greeted as a means of creating a just equalization between those who in times of danger have shunned all services for our country, and those who remained here and under difficult war conditions have worked and looked out for the native land. This consent offers also a guarantee for the fact that the Canton Zuerich will not remain alone at the introduction of this law. Isolated votes made less reservations in regard to the idea of the proposal in itself than in regard to the possibility of its realization.

What does the proposal want?

It strives for a law whereby persons who formerly had settled in Canton Zuerich and after January 1, 1939 moved abroad will be taxed when they return to the Canton Zuerich. This tax shall be levied in the amount of all the taxes levied during the time of their absence, such persons to be exempted from the tax who can prove that abroad they had to look after important cultural or economic interests of Switzerland. This law shall prevent such people who in difficult times left our country and did not care to know anything about us from being able to simply return during better times to swagger again in our economic and cultural life without at least making up part of what all of us have performed for our country.

Only in most recent times has the discussion of this motion in numerous letters to the editor of the "N.Z.Z." been carried to a more emotional plane. I may, therefore, be allowed to deal with a few of the thoughts expressed. Some fellow citizens have pointed out that for Jewish emigrants there was a special reason to flee abroad, and they advocated the view that special leniency is called for towards the latter. Shall the sympathy for isolated categories of fugitives cause us to make a difference in the treatment of fugitive Jews and non-Jews? Therewith the factual discussion threatens to sink to a sentimental plane. Pity on the one side, envy on the other side would be bad advisers for legislators. Or the emphasizing of racial differences or of racial resentments, where, thanks God, such need not play any role in our country, are no legislative-political arguments. A purely Swiss problem is before us and we strive for a solution from our exclusively Swiss data.

The tax proposed by us must tie up with two concrete presuppositions: firstly with the fact of emigration at the time when the war danger set in, and secondly with the fact of returning within a period to be decided after the end of the war. Only he in whose case both presuppositions are true shall be subject to the special tax.

II

The emigration at the beginning of the war under the impression of a danger threatening also our country can be exactly determined in a law by fixing a date - according to my proposal, January 1, 1939 - after which emigration is tabooed by us. After the occupation of Austria, the march into Czechoslovakia, and finally after the outbreak of the war and in the following year after the invasion of Norway, Denmark, Belgium, and Holland, everyone became conscious of what dangers lay hidden in the European war. The danger for the population remaining in the country existed. It came to everybody's consciousness by the evacuation measures into the interior of the country issued by the authorities. Emigration was not forbidden, certainly! But what we taboo is this, that such emigrants return at will - as if nothing had happened - after the end of the war to dispute as far as possible the place in the sun to those who remained here.

The danger, in case Switzerland were drawn into the war, is great for everyone. No guarantee for body and life in case of war can be given by our State. Not even to Christians. Also Christian villages with all their inhabitants have been destroyed, also the Christian civilian population has perished in the bombarded cities. We all know that the danger for the Jews in this war is particularly great, that they were destroyed in comparatively much larger numbers and fell victims to a cruel fate. No justly thinking Swiss will refuse his sympathy to these victims.

But the difference between the fate that threatened the Jews and the fate that threatened the non-Jews is not fundamental. It is only a difference in degree. Danger in itself threatened everyone; only the possibility of being affected by the fate of war was somewhat smaller for the non-Jew. We can, therefore, perhaps better understand the Jew who decided to emigrate than the Christian who did the same. But does this justify a differential treatment? Surely not. For the proposed law does not want to pass judgment as to value. It only wants an equalization of services. The law does not impose any moral qualifications upon the fugitives.

This would be impossible for there are among the emigrants of 1939 and 1940 a whole scale of quite differently conditioned cases. An example is the Jewish businessman who in good time emigrated overseas with a large part of his property and not only left in the lurch his former likewise Jewish co-laborer, who performed here military service, but also competed

000669

with his neck sharply from the safety abroad. Another example is the representative of a free vocation who, on emigrating, left in the lurch his native land and his numerous creditors. Little sympathy is surely deserved by a non-Jewish capitalist who shortly after his naturalization in Switzerland, before the threatening war danger, made a long "pleasure trip" to America, but was careful to liquidate and take along his property. On the other hand, many cases are known - it is a question mostly of Jewish fellow citizens - in which the emigrants decided with a heavy heart to migrate, fulfilled all their obligations here and feeling homeless lead a tragic existence abroad.

These few examples show that it is not possible to classify the cases according to their motives. The legislator must cling to concrete facts. We agree with the correspondent P. R. that the question whether the Swiss Jew had to feel more threatened than the non-Jew has no role to play.

For the fundamental question is quite different. A correspondent has pointed out that our Government would not have been in a position to protect all its citizens in the case of an attack. He who, from the fact that the State in times of war cannot guarantee any absolutely valid protection, wants to infer the inner justification to turn one's back to the State in such times of danger, shows that he does not know the unwritten duties of a Swiss towards his country. The many Jewish fellow citizens who remained here - to these belong the correspondents of the "N.Z.Z." - have shown that they know these duties, that also in times of danger they are indebted to our country.

No, in times of war the State gives no assurance for the protection of all its inhabitants. It cannot do so. In such times the citizen may not demand any guarantees of the State. On the contrary. In times of danger the State must demand of its citizens to be ready to sacrifice everything. A State which cannot count on this sacrifice would be doomed to perish. Every soldier knows this. Every Swiss soldier, in his entire military training, has been taught again and again to be ready to stake his life for the native land. He who stands on frontier-guard, he who risks his life in drills, he who (like every soldier in our country) prepares himself for the defense of his native land, has no certificate of guarantee for his personal safety in this fact but he places consciously his life and civilian existence in the service of his native land. In times like these every citizen, man and woman, is a soldier.

This is the difference between peaceful times in which everyone goes the way that suits him, in which everyone can pursue his safety and comfort, and the times of danger in which, conversely, the State, the native land, must demand readiness to sacrifice.

He who in such times does not feel the unwritten duty to be ready for the native country should not complain if later a small - only financial - sacrifice is demanded of him.

Let it not be said the emigrants had obtained military furlough. There are such, too, who emigrated without permanent furlough and stayed away and most of the others, had they remained in the country, would have surely been recruited later or called in for the HD (home defense) or air defense. In addition to the financial services, which the State has been deprived of by their emigration, there are also other services which were rendered by the Swiss remaining here. Need I remind of the efforts for additional cultivation, of the efforts for overcoming unemployment?

Shall those who fled abroad be dispensed from all these services? They no longer need to render any services or to make any sacrifices if they draw the consequences of their decision made at the time and remain where they migrated.

III

The second point of connection for the special tax is the return of the fugitives.

We all hope that our country will not be drawn into the war. Until now it is one of the very few European countries that has not been afflicted by horrible destructions. Here we shall - so we hope - keep our place in the sun. Here each of us hopes to cultivate his field. Will it not be the right time to ask everyone: What hast thou done for this country in time of danger, in the time when sacrifices were demanded? In Swiss history there have always been times of distress after times of economic prosperity. And it has always been the custom that only he should participate in the harvest who has rendered services in time of danger. Thus in the old Confederation only he could carry on a guild trade who had "traveled" before with the guild, that is, who on the battlefield had killed his man. After this war we must not treat worse the soldier who rendered his service joyfully, who has perhaps sacrificed his little trade, his civilian position, than the one who had vanished during this time. We must not expose this soldier to the unrestrained competition of those who had temporarily closed their business or allowed it to be carried on by others not on account of military service but merely on account of their personal safety.

It is a commandment of Justice to demand here an equalization of the services. A renunciation by the State of such a minimum equalization of services would be an act of ingratitude towards the Swiss soldier and towards every citizen who in hard times has fulfilled his duties. If one confines oneself to demand of the returned fugitives as a subsequent service what can be exactly figured out, namely, the amount of all the taxes

they would have had to pay in case they had remained here, then surely no one is wronged. He who postulates further sanctions beyond this, perhaps expatriation, overlooks the fact that it will not be possible for legislature to distribute moral qualifications or make gradations according to the degree of objectionableness or of excuseability, which differs in every single case of flight. He, however, who - like a correspondent of the "Tat" - finds that the imposition of a mere financial service is too petty a sanction, let him make a better proposal. What we may and can demand is an equalization of the measurable services. By demanding these services we shall refrain from returning all those emigrants who choose their native land only according to business points of view, only according to profitableness.

By the fact that the taxation ties up with the return, the law rests on a safe legal ground. No retroactive law is created, as correspondent A. B. in the "N.Z.Z." fears. The return is a fact lying in the future which the law can lay hold of. Those affected are even free to evade taxation if within the period fixed by law they renounce taking up residence here again, and give thereby to their emigration the character of a permanent decision. He, however, who returns immediately after the cessation of the condition of danger, proves thereby that he wanted to be absent only temporarily only as long as the State could not give him the "safety guarantee." The legislator is free to conceive the notion taxable residence as he wills. As the concept "residence" always comprises also the intention of permanent dwelling, it may be assumed without further ado he who returns soon after the end of the war has never had the intention to remain permanently abroad. Hence, he has not proved any new residence abroad and, therefore, kept his taxable residence in Switzerland. The proposed law can, therefore, build upon the adduced legal concepts of the tax law and can such less be designated as retroactive law than, for instance, the decision of the Confederation Council in regard to the emigrants defense contribution of 1941.

But even the scruple is not sound, there would be created two kinds of Swiss, such as can return without further ado, and such as can purchase their return only by subsequently paying the tax. Justice demands that different presuppositions should be differently treated. He who fled in order not to have to risk his person and his property when danger threatened his native land justly deserves a different treatment from that of the one who had to go abroad to represent Swiss cultural or economic interests, or of the Swiss emigrant who long before the war emigrated regularly and rendered pioneering work abroad for his native land.

The proposed law strives after an equalization of the services. It shall not create any differences but on the contrary make sure that no unwelcome returning emigrants be able to evade their service duties towards our State. It has been greeted by the public as an act of justice. We may, therefore, have the confidence that it will be realized and, in spite of certain difficulties in the handling, which are not absent in any tax law, will produce the expected effect.

- 6 -

It will not remain then confined to the Canton Zurich but will be taken over by other Cantons or, if possible, by the Confederation.

Dr. Hans Pestalozzi

Translated by
Gisela L. Schwarz
September 5, 1944

OLS:hgb
9/11/44

000673

DEPARTMENT

OUTGOING TELEGRAM

August 29, 1944

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

This telegram to be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (REPRODUCED)

The President's War Relief Control Board, Washington Building, Washington 5, D. C.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
SEP 2 1944
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

2 - War Rel
Publ (Mr)
Publ (Mrs)

CONTROL COPY

ALLEGATION

BERN

3001

Department would appreciate being brought up to date on activities of Swiss Refugee Advisory Commission, formation of which was reported your 1130 February 24. It would also be helpful to the Department to have your evaluation of the Commission's effectiveness in coordinating and implementing the work of the various organizations handling refugee matters in Switzerland.

HULL
(EDK)

SWP:MM:amg

8-29-44

WRB

CE

sent at request of War Relief Control Board.

000674

1944 SEP 4 AM 10 56
RECEIVED BOARD
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (~~RESTRICTED~~)

August 31, 1944

6 p.m.

~~RESTRICTED~~

The President's War Relief Control Board,
Washington Building,
Washington, 5, D. C.

AMLEGATION

BERN

3001

Department would appreciate being brought up to date on activities of Swiss Refugee Advisory Commission, formation of which was reported your 1130 February 24. It would also be helpful to the Department to have your evaluation of the Commission's effectiveness in coordinating and implementing the work of the various organizations handling refugee matters in Switzerland.

HULL
(EDK)

SWP:WEM:ang 8-29-44
Send at request of War Relief Control Board.

WRB GE

000675

*I was by the
Pohl*

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 21, 1944
NUMBER: 2877

CONTROL COPY

FOR McCLELLAND.

Refer paragraph marked 4, Department's 2605 of July 28, WRB's 94.

The authorization given to consular officers in Switzerland by the Department's 891 of March 18 and Department's 2236 of July 3 is hereby amended to include authorization to issue such visas to refugee children arriving in Switzerland from Hungary. For issuance through October, the additional non-preference quota immigration numbers given below were allotted to Zurich: Hungarian, 72 to 176 inclusive.

Please advise appropriate Swiss officials and make all appropriate efforts to arrange for the release to Switzerland from Hungary of children who may be eligible for the issuance of such visas.

THIS IS WRB BERN, CABLE NO. 122.

HULL

VD

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

000676

1944 AUG 30 PM 3 29

RECEIVED
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON AT BERN AND McCLELLAND

Refer paragraph marked 4, Department's 2605 of July 28.

WEB's 94.

The authorization given to consular officers in Switzerland by the Department's 891 of March 18 and Department's 2235 of July 3 is hereby amended to include authorization to issue such visas to refugee children arriving in Switzerland from Hungary. For issuance through October, the additional non-preference quota immigration numbers given below were allotted to Zurich: Hungarian, to

Please advise appropriate Swiss officials and make all appropriate efforts to arrange for the release to Switzerland from Hungary of children who may be eligible for the issuance of such visas.

THIS IS WEB BERN CABLE NO. 122

4:05 p.m.
August 12, 1944

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Mannon, McCormack, Cable Control Files

LSL:essert:ah 8-2-44
887

700677

*I was Ref'd
Mr. Little*

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 23, 1944
NUMBER: 2908
X

CONTROL COPY



FOLLOWING FOR McCLELLAND:

Please convey to M. Pilet this Government's warm appreciation of Swiss Government's consent to give temporary refuge to 8,000 holders of Palestine certificates from Hungary in addition to proposed asylum for expectant mothers and children.

Please transmit to the Swiss Government informally our suggestion that it would be helpful if a public statement of the Swiss Government's action was issued, so as to make impossible for Hungarians and Germans to plead that emigration is not feasible, and to give an example to other governments.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 140

HULL

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

000678

engines
relating to 8700
abstraction of 3
Please contact
MONTOMAG FOR SECURITY
MONTOMAG
D. MED.
TO:
FROM:

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON AND McCLELLAND, BERN, SWITZERLAND.

Please convey to M. Pilet this Government's warm appreciation of Swiss Government's consent to give temporary refuge to 8,000 holders of Palestine certificates from Hungary in addition to proposed asylum for expectant mothers and children.

Please transmit to the Swiss Government informally our suggestion that it would be helpful if a public statement of the Swiss Government's action was issued, so as to make impossible for Hungarians and Germans to plead that emigration is not feasible, and to give an example to other governments.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 140

9:45 a.m.
August 23, 1944

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel, Laughlin, Lessers, Mann, Mannon, McCormack, Cable Control Files

Jm BAKzin:JWP:dg 8/22/44

000674

du

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OUTGOING TELEGRAM

Wm B. B. Pille

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

July 15, 1944

9 p.m.

X X

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency.

CONTROL COPY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 18 1944
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS & RECORDS

AMLEGATION,

BERN.

2424

All messages sent on behalf of representatives of the War Refugee Board and messages relating to the operations of the Board should be taken up in your regular accounts for reimbursement by the War Refugee Board in accordance with Section V-45 of the Foreign Service Regulations.

Please submit ~~complete~~ complete list of all messages which you have sent in the Board's interest, as stated above, giving number and date.

HULL
(EPT)

FA:EPT:FE 7/6/44

BF S/CR

WRB

A-8/3

d

000680

DEPARTMENT

OF Telegrams must be
STATE SEC before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (RESTRICTED)

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

July 11 1944
8 p.m.

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

CONTROL COPY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS
JUL 11 1944

AMBASSY,

BERN.
2250

FOR THE MINISTER.

The Governments of the United States and Great Britain have agreed, in furtherance of their joint policy to use every available means consistent with the successful prosecution of the war to bring about the rescue of victims of enemy oppression in imminent danger of death, jointly to approach the Swiss Government in regard to the reception and care of refugees with a view to renewing assurances previously made concerning additional imports, if needed, to meet the needs of refugees admitted to Switzerland.

After conferring with your British colleague, who has received general instructions in the matter, a joint approach should be made to the Swiss Government in the sense of the following:

QUOTE The Governments of the United States and Great Britain desire again to express their admiration for the humanitarian policy which has been followed by the Government of Switzerland in giving asylum and care to the large numbers of refugees who have made their way to Switzerland.

The

000681

-2- #2259, July 3, 8 p.m., to Bern.

The Governments of the United States and Great Britain desire to re-affirm their willingness to arrange for the provision of such additional imports as may be required to ease the burden on Swiss resources resulting from the temporary care of refugees already received in Switzerland or those who may subsequently be received under the liberal and humanitarian Swiss policy in this regard. UNQUOTE.

A similar joint approach is being made to the Government of Sweden. Joint approaches also are being made to the Governments of Turkey, Spain, and Portugal expressing the hope that they will adopt a more liberal policy as regards the reception and temporary care of refugees and offering to arrange for the provision of such additional imports and funds as may be required to ease the burden on local resources arising from the care of such refugees as may be received.

HULL
(GLV)

SWP:EDK:EHJ 7-1-44
BC

WE WRB EH S/CR

000682

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

MAE-304

PLAIN

BERN

Dated July 24, 1944

Rec'd 9:33 p.m.

CONTROL COPY

*2 copies
Contract to He did*

Secretary of State,
Washington.

^X
4730, Twenty-fourth

Internees well quartered have many hot and cold showers. well heated last winter. Food appears abundant and good clothing and tailor shops available. Due favorable sanitary conditions health internees generally excellent. Ill receive free treatment modern dentist office with two chairs open each day treatment free. Notwithstanding favorable conditions internees live under constant threat deportation which influences morale.

HARRISON

HTM

400683

*2-Mon Refugee Bd.
m. Pehle*

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: AMLEGATION, BERN
DATED: June 30, 1944
NUMBER: 2221

CONTROL COPY

For attention of ^{Minister} Ambassador Harrison and McClelland.

Following discussions with Minister Bruggmann in Washington Pehle, Executive Director of War Refugee Board, suggests that refugee problem be discussed informally and in confidence with the Swiss Foreign Office emphasizing in particular the following points:

1. The contribution which Switzerland has made and is making to the refugee problem is appreciated here both in government circles and by the American public.
2. We would appreciate receiving from the Swiss Government informally and confidentially any and all suggestions on what can be done on the problem.
3. We appreciate that certain phases of the matter can best be handled by informal arrangement with the Swiss Government rather than by formal requests to make demands on the German Government. Generally, where such action would be helpful we are willing that you discuss particular problems with the Swiss Government informally and confidentially before making formal requests.

It is the view of Bruggmann that the cooperation of this Government and the Swiss Government on refugee matters could be facilitated by following these suggestions.

The Department is in accord.
THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 62.

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

Dev. Sec.
W. R. Board
D. C. M. Board
JUL 4 1944

000684

DRAFT OF CABLE TO AMBASSADOR HARRISON AND
MCCLELLAND.

Following discussions with Minister Bruggmann in
Washington Pehle, Executive Director of War Refugee Board,
suggests that refugee problem be discussed informally and
in confidence with the Swiss Foreign Office emphasizing in
particular the following points:

1. The contribution which Switzerland has made
and is making to the refugee problem is
appreciated here both in government circles
and by the American public.
2. We would appreciate receiving from the
Swiss Government informally and confidentially
any and all suggestions on what can be done
on the problem.
3. We appreciate that certain phases of the
matter can best be handled by informal arrange-
ment with the Swiss Government rather than by
formal requests to make demands on the German
Government. Generally, where such action would
be helpful we are willing that you discuss
particular problems with the Swiss Government
informally and confidentially before making
formal requests.

It is the view of Bruggmann that the cooperation of this
Government and the Swiss Government on refugee matters could
be facilitated by following these suggestions.

The Department is in accord.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. ^X62

June 29, 1944
10:45

JWP JWP:lhk 6/28/44 *delland*

000685

EXHIBIT
TO CONFERENCE
MEMORANDUM
DATE
BY
FOR THE
OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My dear Mr. Minister:

In connection with our recent talks on refugee problems, I should like you to know that we have just sent a cable to Minister Harrison and our War Refugee Board representative in Bern along the lines which you and I discussed. I am confident that this action will prove to be mutually helpful.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

His Excellency,
The Minister of Switzerland,
Washington, D. C.

*Handled
carefully
JWP*

700686

My dear Mr. Minister:

In connection with our recent talks on
refugee problems, I should like you to know that we
have just sent a cable to Minister Harrison and our
War Refugee Board representative in Bern along the
lines which you and I discussed. I am confident
that this action will prove to be mutually helpful.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

His Excellency,
The Minister of Switzerland,
Washington, D. C.

10/15/44

EMR FBI:agr 7-11-44

000687

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

CLASSIFICATION 2. War Ref Bd

666 29 1944

June 26, 1944
1:00 pm

*1 m
Belle*

TO CERTAIN AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS

CONTROL COPY

CIRCULAR AIRTEL

FOR THE [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] INFORMATION OF THE
AMBASSADOR:

The following message for the Legation at Bern is repeated to you for your information and that of the appropriate authorities of the country to which you are accredited in order to enable the latter to take parallel action, should they so desire.

The Department and the War Refugee Board are receiving reports indicating that there are held in camps situated in Germany and German-controlled territory, to which the protecting Powers and the International Red Cross have been granted no access or else such strictly limited forms of access that they have been unable effectively to assist the individuals in question, a number of unquestioned nationals and persons claiming the nationality of the United States and other American Republics. Belsen-Bergen near Hannover, Bergau near Dresden, Drancy near Paris and Theresienstadt are sites of such camps. Since late in 1943 the

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

000688

-2-

CHICAGO, June 28, 1 p.m.

the camp at first in silence appear to have been placed in this category. Possibly other camps of the same character exist.

The Swiss Government should be asked as protecting power of the United States kindly to investigate this situation. Please request it to endeavor to have its representatives visit the camps referred to for the purpose of reporting upon the claims of individuals held in these camps to citizenship of the United States or in applicable cases of other American Republics represented by Switzerland. Please make similar efforts regarding camps and other establishments which may exist in Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria or any other areas under control of German-dominated authorities.

Article 26 of the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention as applied to interned civilians by mutual agreement of the belligerents should be the base of the request to visit such camps. The extraordinary restrictions placed by the German authorities upon communications with these camps have deprived the persons detained there and the protecting power of normal means of dealing with their claims to the protection of foreign states - hence in order to protect the vital interests of such detainees it is essential that visits be made to these camps. In this connection, reference is made to the case of Franz Kahn (Department's A-199, April 24 and previous) in which the extraordinary

000684

CINCINNATI, June 20, 1 p.m.

-3-

extraordinary regulations attendant upon correspondence between him and the protecting Board have unjustifiably impeded the verification of his claim to American citizenship.

The International Red Cross Committee, despite extended efforts to visit the camps in question, has been unsuccessful in its exertions so far. Appreciation of the Department and the War Relocation Board for these efforts should be expressed. Also please express the hope that there will be no abatement of these efforts.

WILL
(15.)

CODE ROOM: Repeat to American Missions to Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Great Britain, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

WRB:MMV:KG
6/20/44

PD

ARA

BC

S/CR

000690

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
To: American Legation, Bern
DATED: June 24, 1944
NUMBER: 2149

The Department and the War Refugee Board are receiving reports indicating that there are held in camps situated in Germany and German-controlled territory, to which the protecting Powers and the International Red Cross have been granted no access or else such strictly limited forms of access that they have been unable effectively to assist the individuals in question, a number of unquestioned nationals and persons claiming the nationality of the United States and other American Republics. Belsen-Bergan near Hanover, Bergau near Dresden, Drancy near Paris and Theresienstadt are sites of such camps. Since late in 1943 the camp at Tost in Silesia appears to have been placed in this category. Possibly other camps of the same character exist.

The Swiss Government should be asked as protecting Power of the United States to investigate this situation. Please request it to endeavor to have its representatives visit the camps referred to for the purpose of investigating the claims of individuals held in these camps to citizenship of the United States or of other American Republics. Please make similar efforts regarding camps and other establishments which may exist in Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria or any other areas under control of German-dominated authorities.

cc.
Sec'y

Abrahamson
Aksin
Bernstein
Bohn
DuBois
Friedman
Gaston
Hodel
Laughlin
Lesser
Luxford
Mann
Mannon
Marks
McCormack
Sargoy
Smith
Standish
Stewart
Wainstein
H. D. White
Fehle, File

Article 86 of the Geneva Prisoners of War Convention as applied to interned civilians by mutual agreement of the belligerents should be the base of the request to visit such camps. The extraordinary restrictions placed by the German authorities upon communications with these camps have deprived the persons detained there and the protecting Power of normal means of dealing with their claims to the protection of foreign states - hence in order to protect the vital interests of such detainees it is essential that visits be made to these camps. In this connection, reference is made to the case of Franz Kahn (Department's A-189, April 24 and previous) in which the extraordinary regulations attendant upon correspondence between him and the protecting Power have unjustifiably impeded the verification of his claim to American citizenship.

The International Red Cross Committee, despite extended efforts to visit the camps in question, has been unsuccessful in its exertions so far. Appreciation of the Department and the War Refugee Board for these efforts should be expressed. Also please express the hope that there will be no abatement of these efforts.

WEB CABLE NO. 35 TO BERN

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-78
BY R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1977

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: June 20, 1944
REF ID: X
8956

CONTROL COPY

Reference is made herewith to your circular of June 15.

On June 16 we officially communicated to the Swiss Foreign Office the President's message. Also the message has been serviced to 145 newspapers in Switzerland and we have received assurances that every leading newspaper in the country will carry the message in full. We have provided editorial comment for seven influential German language and French language Swiss papers with combined country wide coverage. The subject will also be treated by Radio Suisse. Similarly we complied with instructions in your June 14 circular. WRB should be informed.

In order to disseminate the substance of the message in enemy territory we will use established channels and usual means.

HARRISON

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

000692

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: Mar 16, 1944
CLASS: 3043

Reference is made herewith to No. 37 from USA, your cable of Jan. 6, 1944 No. 1943.

1. A note requesting transmission of inquiry to Hungarian Government, as suggested, has been delivered to the Swiss Foreign Office. This note requests an indication of the intentions of Hungary as regards further treatment of Jews with special reference to forced deportations, discriminatory reductions of food rations or adoption of similar measures that amount to mass execution and regarding them of the grave view which the United States takes regarding persecution of Jews and other minorities and the United States' determination to punish those sharing the responsibility in accordance with the March 21 warning by the President.

The Foreign Office has accepted the note as presented and will transmit verbatim as annex to the note to the authorities of Hungary. It has been agreed by the Swiss to report the date of the delivery of the note.

2. It is recommended that the foregoing be given no publicity pending receipt of information of delivery of the note by the Swiss to the Hungarians and that no mention of Swiss intermediaries be made should publicity then appear to be advisable.

3. Considering the extremely small number of radio receiving sets in Hungary, dropping pamphlets by plane would be the best method of achieving publicity in Hungary.

HARRISON

CC: Miss Chauncey (For the Sec'y), Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Ericsson, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Lufford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pehle, Sargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H.D. White, Files.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-78
By R. H. Parks Date **SEP 13 1972**

16.72

Wm. Reppel
(over)
copy

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 5, 1944
NUMBER: 3579
X

CONTROL COPY

Reference is made herewith to the ultimate paragraph of Legation's cable of May 18, no. 3171.

From the Swiss Foreign Office the Legation has received a list of 162 persons removed from Vittel for unknown destination of whom 3 allegedly claim Chilean citizenship, 8 Costa Rican, 8 Ecuadorian, 4 Haitian, 9 Honduran, 5 Nicaraguan, 87 Paraguayan, 3 Venezuelan, 7 Peruvian, and 29 unknown.

Since the list contains error in numbering, Legation is requesting Swiss to confirm whether 162 or 163 persons involved.

You are asked to please instruct whether the Department wishes nominal list sent telegraphically which includes date and place of birth.

There were born in Poland a large proportion of the persons concerned.

Foregoing refers to Latin American interests--Germany and France.

HARRISON

RECEIVED
MAY 11 1944
AMERICAN LEGATION
BERN

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

100694

*was Ref Board
and Edle
Kopy*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 16, 1944
NUMBER: 3110

CONTROL COPY

McClelland sends following for WRB attention.

This refers to April 22 telegram No. 1405 from Department.

Your greetings and the confidence placed in me by Board's nomination are sincerely appreciated. Although practical possibilities are distinctly limited as regards refugee rescue work from Switzerland I will do all in my power to forward aims of the Board. Continued assistance to reliable relief organizations is recommended, and as initial step of great practical importance in this direction it would be helpful to enable them to receive their funds for use in occupied territories regularly at official rate of exchange. If possible all publicity should be avoided and only in strictest confidence should reports concerning progress and plans of relief rescue operations be discussed with organizations in the United States. To certain extent publicity given through U.S. press dispatches to my appointment has already compromise aid which neutral authorities such as the International

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

100693

Red Cross and Swiss authorities might be prepared to
lend to refugee rescue operations from base in
Switzerland.

Fairly close contacts have been established
with situation of refugees of France. I also hope
to send you shortly a reliable reports on Jewish
situation and other endangered refugees of Hungary
and northern Italy together with whatever suggestions *possible*
as to *possible* steps concerning rescue or practical
relief. However, I fear that very little can be
accomplished from Switzerland in case of Hungary.

HARRISON

WASHINGTON, D.C.
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WAR RECEIVED

JAN 18 11 02 AM '42

700696

TELEGRAM SENT

*Copy
Control to Hill*

RP

PLAIN

APR 22, 1944

War Refugee Board

AMLEGATION,

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF
APR 22 1944
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

BERN.
1405, Twenty-second
FOR THE MINISTER. Please deliver the following to

McClelland from War Refugee Board.

WRB no. 3.

Board delighted that you have accepted appointment as its Special Representative. Felle sends personal thanks and feels confident that you will do competent job. War Refugee Board will support you to fullest extent. Please do not (repeat not) hesitate to make frequent comments and suggestions.

HULL
(GLW)

WRE:GLW:KQ
4/22/44

WE A-S/3 FA

000697

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington

TO: Amlegation, Bern

DATED: April 22, 1944

NUMBERS: 1395

Reference your No. 2301 April 13, 1944. The Turkish Government has already acted in support of the IORC request for safe conduct for the SE TARI. The Swedish Government has been asked to support such request and has agreed to do so. Accordingly you may care to bring these facts to the attention of Swiss Government in an effort to persuade it to reconsider its position. Please keep the Department and War Refugee Board advised on this matter.

THIS IS WRS BERN CABLE NO. 2

cc: Sec'y, Abrahamson, Akis, Bernstein, Caha, DuBois, Friedman, Ganton, Hadel, Laughlin, Lesser, Lufford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pollak, Rains, Sargey, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Felix Files.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter 111-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP-13 1972

000698

COPY

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Bern
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 14, 1944
NUMBER: 2348

In substance the following is a paraphrase of the reply of the Swiss Federal Political Department dated April 13 to my note dated April 7 which transmitted the request of the Department that in its own name Switzerland immediately support the request of the International Red Cross Committee to all belligerents for the steamship BELLACITTA's safe conduct.

The Political Department, while eagerly desiring the materialization of the representations which the International Committee has made, will refrain from supporting them in Berlin by reason of the decision concerning the similar case of the TARI, a Turkish steamship, which the Federal Council adopted. The note of April 12 sent to the Legation of the United States answering its communication dated March 25 explains the reasons for this decision.

My number 2301 dated April 13 contained the substance of the note referred to which was dated April 12.

HARRISON

DGR:MFL
4/20/44

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

cc: Sec'y, Abrahamson, Aksin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pollak, Raine, Sargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Pehle, Files.

000699

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM The American Minister Bern
TO The Secretary of State Washington
DATE April 13 1944
NUMBER 2301

The following message is for the War Refugee
When I called upon Minister Bern on April 10 I gave
him a note which contained the substance of your number 1182
dated April 8

Mr. Pilet Golaz asked me to call upon him yesterday and
gave me a note in reply. After explaining the relationship be-
tween ICRC and the Federal Government this note points out that
cases may occur when a step taken by ICRC may be supported al-
though mainly by several neutral states and that it is however
the Federal Government to assure itself that in
such cases the participation will be completely consistent with
its position as the protecting power and that such participa-
tions do not jeopardize the interest of neutral states. Never-
theless the note also points out that although the case has been
examined with sympathetic attention by the Federal Government
which has considered it from the humanitarian interest only, it
has become convinced that its support of the request for safe
conduct for the S. S. TARI, rather than work in favor of the
desired result would impede the efforts of ICRC. In conclusion
the note states that the Federal Department without naturally
entering into any engagement would not refuse to consider if such
be the case Switzerland a participation in a joint step which
other neutral states may spontaneously decide to undertake in
this matter for exclusively humanitarian motives.

In order to fully explain the status which ICRC vis a vis
the Federal Government enjoy, Mr. Pilet Golaz told me he was
telegraphing Minister Bruggman.

HARRISON

DCR:MPL
4/17/44

cc Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y.), Abrahamson, Aknin.

Burnstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin,
Lesser, Lufford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pehle,
Pollak, Rains, Sargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein,
H.D. White, Files.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

C
O
P
Y

Paraphrase of telegram No. 2004, March 30, 3 p.m., from Bern.

We have sent the following telegram to Madrid:

With reference to your March 27, 8 p.m., classes of refugees described below will be allowed to enter Switzerland:

Political refugees (these understood to be defined as fugitives who are subject individually to arrest or imprisonment because of political beliefs), escaped prisoners of war, deserters. Swiss Government usually does not turn down helpless individuals (children under six and parents accompanying them, pregnant women, the sick, the aged and close relatives of Swiss nationals. In so-called "heartbreak" cases humane discretion is exercised.

Majority of refugees enter secretly. Refusals are probably less than number of entrants. Since August 1, 1942 refugees allowed to enter included about 100 deserters, 200 escaped prisoners of war, 700 French (Alsation non-Jews), 200 Polish and other Aryans, 100 Dutch non-Jews, 8000 of all nationalities (telegram to Department, March 2, 1943)

Swiss police are instructed that persons deported be permitted to return to country whence they came, same way they came to Switzerland, that is secretly, to reduce risk of being caught.

Above should be considered as confidential.

Under humane conditions, admitted refugees are legally interned pursuant to new federal decree of March 12, 1943 (See our 1997, March 29, not always in camps. If able-bodied, they are required to perform work of general usefulness. Their valuables are subject to sequestration to pay expense of upkeep and provide funds for eventual emigration.

Repeated to Department only.

HARRISON

000701

*War Refugee Board
(Mr. Kalle)*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON
TO: AMLEGATION, BERN
DATED: MARCH 24, 1944
NUMBER: 983
X

CONTROL COPY



The message given below refers to your telegram of March 4, 1944, nos. 1304 and 1321.

With respect to paragraph number four of the Sternbuch-Rubinfield-Rosenbunm reports contained in your cable no. 1321, you are informed that the confidential statements made in that report are not necessarily inconsistent with the Swiss Government's official statement contained in your cable no. 1304. The interpretation which the Swiss authorities, including the Swiss Department of Foreign Police, placed on the phrase "political refugees" and the persons considered in such category by those authorities would seem to be the pertinent consideration. We suggest that the appropriate Swiss Government officials be approached to determine as definitely as possible the extent to which the Swiss authorities, including the border guards and cantonal police, the Swiss Foreign Police Department and any other authorities concerned, consider the following as political refugees: one, stateless Jews, including those of military age; two, nationals of the United Nations countries now occupied by the Germans who are of Jewish descent; three, nationals of German satellite countries who are of Jewish descent; and four, nationals in general of the United Nations countries now occupied by Germany.

The

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

000702

The many problems with which Switzerland has had to contend, as mentioned in your 1304, are appreciated by this Government but it believes that persons falling within all four of the categories mentioned above should, prima facie, be considered political refugees and as such should be afforded, after required security checks, temporary refuge without considering whether they have close relatives living in Switzerland and without regard to age or sex. You may determine to what extent the foregoing should be communicated to the Swiss after considering the replies to the specific inquiries set forth above, you receive from the Government of Switzerland.

We suggest that you may desire to ^{bring}~~present~~ to the Swiss Government's attention the fact that the Jewish people of Europe are refugees because of Germany's political action and the political action of her satellites and that therefore they are political refugees in every sense of the term.

It is requested that you inform the Department of such views as the Swiss Government might express regarding the matter under reference and of any developments resulting from your negotiations with the Swiss Government.

HULL

000703

March 21, 1944

2:22 p.m.

To: Mr. Stettinius

From: J. W. Pehle

Attention: Mr. George Warren

I would appreciate it if the annexed cable were transmitted
to Minister Harrison, Bern, as promptly as possible.

(Signed J. W. Pehle

LEL:als 3/21/44

L.S.L. *gld*

700704

PROPOSED CABLE TO BERN

Reference your 1304 and 1321, March 4, 1944.

The official statement of the Swiss government as contained in your 1304 is not necessarily inconsistent with the statements made confidential in paragraph numbered four of the Sternbuch-Rubinfield-Rosenbaum report contained in your 1321. The question appears to be the interpretation which the Swiss authorities, including the Swiss Foreign Police Department, place on the phrase QUOTE political refugees UNQUOTE and the persons whom such authorities consider as being in that category. The Department therefore suggests that you approach appropriate officials of the Swiss government for the purpose of ascertaining as specifically as possible the extent to which the Swiss authorities including the Swiss Foreign Police Department, border guards and cantonal police, etcetera, consider the following as political refugees: (1) Stateless Jews; (2) Jewish nationals of United Nations now occupied by the Germans; (3) Jewish nationals of Germany and her satellites; and (4) nationals, generally, of United Nations now occupied by the Germans.

While this Government appreciates the many problems confronting Switzerland as outlined in your 1304, it believes that persons in all four of the above enumerated classes should be prima facie considered political refugees and should be afforded, after appropriate security checks, temporary refuge as political refugees without regard to age or sex or whether they have close relatives in Switzerland. To the extent that it may be appropriate in the light of the responses you receive from the Swiss authorities to the specific inquiries indicated above, you should communicate the foregoing to them.

You may also wish to point out that it is by reason of Germany's political action and the political action of her satellites that the Jews of Europe are refugees and that as a consequence they are political refugees in every real sense of the term.

Please advise the Department of any views expressed by the Swiss and of any developments arising from your approaches in this connection.

LSLesser:als 3/21/44

000705

PADAIPHEAFA OF TELEGRAM BART

FROM : Secretary of State Washington

TO : American Legation, Bern

DATE: March 7, 1944

CLASS: 700

X

The fact that you have had approaches through various channels from one or more of the Governments of Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary and that you have channels through which messages can be conveyed to one or more of these Governments is born in mind by the Department

Be instruct you to convey through such channels to the Governments of Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, or any of them to which you have such access, the following information:

At the present time the Government of the United States is aware that these Governments are pursuing programs of persecuting their Jewish minorities and refugees of other nationalities who have escaped into their territories. The persecution consists among other forms in sending such refugees beyond the borders of their own countries into Poland where they undergo various forms of cruelty and even death, dictated by Nazi degeneracy. Still another form of persecution consists in preventing the refugees from escaping to neutral countries where their lives may be saved.

The Government of the United States is determined to do everything it can to rescue such unfortunates who are in danger of losing their lives and to find for them havens of refuge. Any continuation by these Governments of the execution of these policies of Hitlerite persecutions is viewed with great seriousness by this Government and will be kept in mind. The President, in establishing the War Refugee Board, recently restated unequivocally the position of the United States Government in this matter. (Department's cable to Bern of January 25, 1944 No. 201). The Government of the United States takes the view that these Governments, as well as their subordinates and functionaries, are fully responsible for the actions of persecution committed on their territories and in the interests of humanity they should desist immediately.

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

Moreover, they should be informed that in their own interest they will be well advised to take advantage in the future of such opportunities as may be available to them to allow refugees to depart across their borders into territories of any neutral countries which may be prepared to receive them.

You are requested to try to ascertain through appropriate channels that the Governments in question have received the substance of this message, and the results of the representations, if any.

The foregoing message was repeated to Cairo for No. 100 and as Great Britain 57 and to Stockholm, Lisbon, and Ankara the Department's cables Nos. 378, 313 and 177 respectively.

STETTINIUS

cc: Miss Chauncey (Sec'y), Mrs. Cohn, Miss Hodel, Miss Laughlin, Messrs. Abrahamson, Aksin, Bernstein, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, McCormack, Paul, Pollak, Rains, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Mr. Fehle, Files.

000700

CONTROL COPY

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 4, 1944
NUMBER: 1303

File

Reference my telegram No. 941 February 15.

A reply has just been received from Pilet Golas, dated March 2, in answer to the letter I addressed to him on February 2, with aide memoire informing him of the valuation of the war refugee board and policy as set forth in Department's circular telegram 251 January 25, and text of which follows in my 1304, March 4.

See my telegram 7262, November 19, for text of note verbale of November 16 referred to in the second paragraph of Swiss note of March 2.

HARRISON

cc: Secy. (orig.), Messrs. Abramson, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois (2), Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, McCormack, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Stewart, H.D. White, Files

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

000708

CONTROL COPY

SFG-242
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (BR)

Bern

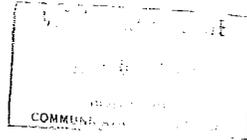
Dated March 4, 1944

Rec'd. 1:36 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

1304, March 4, 9 a.m.



"My dear Minister, by letter of February 2, you kindly informed me of the decision of the President of the United States to create an inter-departmental board for refugee questions. At the same time you advised me of your Government's purposes in this matter and you (*) me to what extent the Swiss Government would be ready to collaborate in the relief work contemplated by the Government of the United States. Finally, you ask for any suggestions we might wish to make.

Concerning the contribution of Switzerland to the solution of the problem, you are aware, I believe, of our past and present efforts. We have kept you regularly informed in this respect. I may therefore be brief on this point more so as the political (?) in its ^{note}verbale of November 16 last stated very exactly, for the information of your Government, the manner in

000709

~~2~~-#1304, March 4, 9 a.m., from Bern

manner in which the problem of refugees and internees, Jews and non-Jews, presents itself for Switzerland.

I shall, therefore, restrict myself to specifying that, according to the latest statistics out of 70,500 refugees and internees of all categories in Switzerland at the beginning of 1944, about 53,000 of which 22,000 are Jews, fall approximately within the classification of persons referred to in your inquiry.

This being said, I must remind you that notwithstanding the great desire of our population that our country be receptive and hospitable, our authorities have had to take into account the risk to our security of having a massive unchecked influx of foreigners, possibly containing undesirable elements and also requirements of national defense particularly in certain regions. Security of Switzerland in the long run is also security of those who have taken refuge there.

Apart from persons with military status, Switzerland, as is known now, admits into its territory as far as circumstances permit in particular: political refugees, sick people and pregnant women, aged persons over 65 and their wives or husbands, infants or very young people; persons with close relatives in Switzerland; finally, the women who have lost their

Swiss

000710

-4- #1304, March 4, 9 a.m. - from Bern

present situation and economic future of our population. *

Having thus briefly summarized situation, it remains for me to touch on the last paragraph of your aide memoire. You will not be surprised--through observation and knowledge of our practices over several years-- and it will certainly be understood in Washington that while contributing as substantial aid as possible in specific cases as it has constantly done since the beginning of war Switzerland by the very nature of its strict neutrality cannot associate itself formally with initiatives of belligerent governments. Maintenance of this attitude, far from hindering its effective activity and while properly speaking not constituting a ruling factor, does, on the contrary, tend at least to reinforce the position whereby Switzerland is still able, in the heart of Europe, to continue its contribution to practical accomplishments in the field of relief to war victims.

We could not find a better medium than you to explain to the American Government that while we are anxious to persevere along the lines we have traced for ourselves and to continue to give the greatest effect

000711

-5- #1304, March 4, 9 a.m. - from Bern

effect within our means, limited, of course, by existing circumstances and our present state, to the feelings of human solidarity which animate the Swiss people, our activities must remain independent and autonomous. That is the reason why we are always anxious to avoid having relief which we give here or there from becoming a subject of controversy between belligerents.

It is hardly necessary to assure you that in the future as in the past we shall be ready to examine in a spirit imbued with practical realism as well as sympathetic understanding, the specific cases in which our cooperation may be judged compatible with the principles mentioned above. Thus as you are aware in compliance with a request from the inter-governmental Committee at London inspired by the American and British Governments, we have undertaken to approach the French authorities at Vichy regarding the possibility of obtaining emigration permits for children of refugees threatened with deportation or whose parents have been deported or threatened with deportation.

I wish to add that it would be useful to us to be

kept

000712

-6- #1304, March 4, 9 a.m.- from Bern

kept informed of the measures which will be taken as
a result of the recent decisions of the President of
the United States".

HARRISON

(*) Apparent omission

WIE
HTM

000713

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Entire

JBZ

FROM: AMERICAN LEGATION, BERN
TO: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON
DATED: MARCH 4, 1944
NUMBER: 1321

*For American
States it was
agony to
push the
Swiss in
this.
JWA*



Reference your 341, February 2.

Comprising the substance of report by Sternbuch, Rubinfeld and Rosenbaum please inform, in your discretion, the Vaad Hanatzala Emergency Committee of the following:

1. (BEGIN) Snow and cold have greatly increased the rescue work begun recently. Have transmitted to Rabbi Nitza and Satmar 35,000 Swiss francs to date, also to persons in Budapest, where action controlled by orthodox personalities. Cooperation by all. Results will be communicated to both you and the Legation at Bern.

2. It is now very difficult to reach Palestine through Turkey. Conditions in Turkey are terrible and the cost of permits for transit Turkey enormous. Each week only eight persons admitted for transit. Consequently, men in Slovakia and Hungary with certificates cannot leave and must remain in hiding. In connection with this matter Rabbis Herzog and Doctor Eliasch are staying in Istanbul. In order to secure greater relief or free transit to all holders of Palestine certificates who do not intend to remain in Turkey we request that endeavor be made to intervene with Turkish Government.

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

3. Deportations

000714

3. Deportations recently occurred from Belgium, France and Holland of persons in hiding who might have reached Switzerland if funds had been at hand. Everyday we get appeals from such persons many starving in their places of hiding. Among Belgium and French refugees in America, please institute big movement in their favor. Delay threatens them with deportation East beyond the possibility of rescue. For refugees in these countries may we use funds made available to us?

4. [REDACTED]. The possibility of refugees from Belgium, France and Holland to enter Switzerland limited only to elderly men over sixty, women with minor children or those who may have relatives in Switzerland. In accordance with order of the Swiss Foreign Police Department, other categories such as younger men are prohibited entry at the frontier and are rejected without hearing regardless of the consequences to be driven to death. In order to initiate an intervention such refugees are not even allowed to telephone to their acquaintances. To imagine what such treatment means for men who after facing even death to attain Swiss territory find themselves there refused is not difficult.

Recently for the above reasons very few refugees from France or Belgium have tried to enter Switzerland. It would be of great importance to influence the Swiss Government to admit persecuted Jews fleeing from Nazis or political refugees. Several months ago the Nunciature Apostolique at Bern, with

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

000715

whom we have excellent relations and who has long been helpful to us at our request intervened for Vatican with Swiss Government. At that time facilities were granted, but refusals continue in a quiet way and if the number of refugees again rises will increase. Signed: Sternbuch, Rubinfeld, Rosenbaum.
(END)

Please read my 1303 and 1304, of March 4, which contain official statement of Swiss Government policy regarding the admission of refugees, in connection with the statements made confidential in paragraph numbered four above.

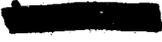
HARRISON

000716

*War Refugee Board
(Mr. Belle) par,
information*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMERICAN LEGATION, BERN
TO: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON
DATED: MARCH 4, 1944
NUMBER: 1321
X



Reference your 341, February 2.

Comprising the substance of report by Sternbuch, Rubinfeld, and Rosenbaum please inform, in your discretion, the Vaad Hahatzala Emergency Committee of the following:

1. (BEGIN) Snow and cold have greatly increased the rescue work begun recently. Have transmitted to Rabbis Nitra and Satmar 35,000 Swiss francs to date, also to persons in Budapest, where action controlled by orthodox personalities. Cooperation by all. Results will be communicated to both you and the Legation at Bern.

2. It is now very difficult to reach Palestine through Turkey. Conditions in Turkey are terrible and the cost of permits for transit Turkey enormous. Each week only eight persons admitted for transit. Consequently, men in Slovakia and Hungary with certificates cannot leave and must remain in hiding. In connection with this matter Rabbis Herzog and Doctor Eliasch are staying in Istanbul. In order to secure greater relief or free transit to all holders of Palestine certificates who do not intend to remain in Turkey we request that endeavor be made to intervene with Turkish Government.

3. Deportations

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

000717

3. Deportations recently occurred from Belgium, France and Holland of persons in hiding who might have reached Switzerland if funds had been at hand. Everyday we get appeals from such persons many starving in their places of hiding. Among Belgium and French refugees in America, please institute big movement in their favor. Delay threatens them with deportation East beyond the possibility of rescue. For refugees in these countries may we use funds made available to us?

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

whom

000713

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to us at our request intervened for Vatican with Swiss Govern-
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tinue in a quiet way and if the number of refugees again
rises will increase. Signed: Sternbuch, Rubinfeld, Rosenbaum.
(END)

Please read my 1303 and 1304, of March 4, which contain
official statement of Swiss Government policy regarding the
admission of refugees, in connection with the statements made
confidential in paragraph numbered four above.

HARRISON

000719

CONTROL COPY

Bern

LC - 439

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

Dated February 24, 1944

Rec'd 9:55 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

1130, February 24, 6 p.m.

Legation's 980 February 17.

Newly formed Swiss refugee advisory commission met for the first time on February 23 under chairmanship of Federal Councilor von Steiger Chief of Federal Department of Justice and Police. Its 65 members all Swiss include representatives of federal military and civil agencies concerned with refugee problems several members of Parliament and representatives of some 30 odd refugee and other relief societies: Swiss Red Cross, International Red Cross Committee, Swiss Protestant Catholic Jewish and Quaker organizations children and students aid societies, also Swiss organizations concerned especially with relief of Italian, French refugees and representatives of Swiss trades-union council.

Commission is expected to serve in coordinating refugee work of official semi-official and private organizations, submit well considered suggestions to responsible authorities and to deal in first instance with any specific local criticisms of treatment of refugees in Switzerland or of governmental refugee policy. Subcommittees are to be set up: One dealing with juridical and disciplinary questions; second with questions of nourishment, lodging, clothing of refugees; third with questions of education and recreation. Fourth subcommittee may later be named to consider post-war repatriation or overseas settlement problems.

GAZETTE DE SAUSANNE this morning forecasts that "This new institution will render considerable service both to refugees and to authorities responsible for welfare of 70,000 refugees already in Switzerland."

HARRISON

WSB

000721

CONTROL COPY

File
7H

EJE-399
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Governmental
agency. (ER)

Bern
Dated February 17, 1944
Rec'd 4:55 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

980, February 17, 10 a.m.

It is officially announced that Federal Councilor
Von Steiger, Chief Federal Department of Justice and Police,
is forming consultative committee of Swiss interested in
refugee problems which will convene for first time on
February 23 and thereafter monthly with object of advising
Government on proposals from various sources in regard to
refugee matters. Small working subcommittee to be appointed.

Committee I understand will consist of 30 to 40 members
including responsible civilian and military officials con-
cerned with such matters, representatives of refugee aid
societies and several members of Parliament.

HARRISON

EJH

000722

*Was Refugee Board
Mr. Pehle*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: February 15, 1944
NUMBER: 941

Department's telegram dated February 11, 1944, No. 459, is referred to herewith.

Given below is a preliminary answer to questions in the Department's telegram of January 25, 1944, No. 251.

1. A reply is being awaited by this Legation to the communication to the Swiss Foreign Office regarding War Refugee Board to which reference is made in my telegram of January 31, 1944, No. 624. Also, I am awaiting for a reaction to my note of February 5, 1944 (supported by British Legation's concurring note) concerning burden on resources of Switzerland of care of refugees (see Department's telegram of January 20, 1944, No. 190); and also we are waiting for a reply to joint representations made on 9th of February concerning Swiss reception of selected children from France, Belgium and other territories occupied by the Germans (see my cable of February 10, 1944, No. 624). Answers are also pending to messages forwarded by War Refugee Board to International Red Cross Committee (Department's telegrams of January 27 and February 9, 1944, Nos. 279 and 437) regarding funds for relief operations for Jews and other persecuted groups especially in Rumania, Hungary, Theresienstadt, Croatia and Slovakia.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

2. More than

000723

2. More than 70,000 refugees have already been admitted by Switzerland (70,493 as of January 1 according to published figures). Please see my telegram dated October 27, 1943, No. 6729, for comparison of estimate of 63,000 in categories listed in Swiss Government's October²⁵ note.

3. Swiss Government's general policy in dealing with refugee problem was set forth in my telegram of November 19, 1943, No. 7262. The Swiss Government still makes it a practice to admit refugees in the following categories (see my telegram of March 30, 1943, No. 2004): political refugees (defined as fugitives subject individually to arrest or imprisonment for political beliefs); military deserters; escaped prisoners of war; physically helpless persons (sick persons, pregnant women, aged persons, children and parents accompanying children). A great majority enter clandestinely. In order to lessen risk of detection, fugitives not officially admitted are allowed to leave in the same manner in which they cross the frontier, i.e., clandestinely.

It is reported by the press that new entrants are coming in at the rate of about 90 to 100 a night, the bulk of them from Italy. Among Italians the percentage of Jews is very high.

5. The following factors seem to motivate the Swiss Government's restriction of entry of non-Swiss refugees, in addition to problem of lodging and feeding refugees: fear of giving encouragement to anti-Semitism; high percentage of foreigners in Switzerland, about 400,000 or 10 percent of the total population; the belief that the admission of an increasing number

000724

number of refugees who are enemies of the Nazi regime might compromise the neutrality of the Swiss (indicated in the Swiss Government's November 16 note last quoted in my telegram of November 19 mentioned above).

Evidently the furnishing of funds from abroad is less important than furnishing food and clothing for the refugees as indicated by the Swiss Government's and National Bank's disinclination to make Swiss francs generally available for local purchases against blocked dollars on behalf of refugees.

6. While it was intimated by the Foreign Office in its November 16 note that financial "facilities" may become necessary, it was stated that there was actual need for clothing and blankets and foodstuffs for refugees and that it was hoped that requests for license to purchase and transport replacement stocks of clothing and food would be given sympathetic consideration by the American Government.

7. Latest available information concerning condition of refugees in Axis and Axis occupied territory as received from informed sources has been provided continuously to the Department by the Legation. The Legation is giving its advice and assistance to such private organizations as the Unitarian Service Committee, the Joint Distribution Committee, World Jewish Congress, and others in their attempt to organize and finance relief in European areas from Switzerland as the center. Progress has been made in general and I am pleased to report

000725

-4-

to report that federal authorities of Switzerland have shown
no disposition to be other than helpful in these respects.

HARRISON

000726

COPY: DGR:AGN

RF

This telegram must be re-phrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (BR)

AMERICAN LEGATION
BERN

190

January 10, 1944

Soon

Department has received comments of British Government on proposed communication set forth in Department's 3159, December 17. Certain modifications have been proposed and agreed to by Department and FEA and revised text is as follows, a paraphrase of which should be prepared for submission in form of a note to Swiss Foreign Office:

"The American and British Governments are aware of and greatly appreciate the generous reception extended by the Swiss Government to the large number of refugees who have made their way to Switzerland. The time is anticipated when these refugees may be repatriated, and the British and United States Governments will cooperate in every way toward the achievement of that end. The two governments are conscious of the burden upon Swiss resources which has resulted from the care of such refugees, and will be glad to give sympathetic consideration to such proposals as the Swiss Government may wish to make toward easing the burden which such care has placed upon the economy of Switzerland. The Swiss Government may be assured that the Governments of the United Kingdom and of the United States will give as favorable consideration as may be permitted by the circumstances to requests for the purchase and extraordinary import through the blockade of additional supplies of food stuffs and textiles to relieve the burden placed on Swiss resources as a consequence of assistance extended to refugees. Reference is made in this connection to telegram 2537 of October 15, from the Department of State to the American Legation at Bern, in which mention was made of the sympathetic attitude in the United States on the part of various relief organizations and their desire to be of assistance.

"The American and British Governments suggest that opportunity may be taken of the Swiss Economic Delegation's visit to London to discuss with representatives of the two governments any further questions in connection with the refugee problem which the Swiss Government may wish to raise."

Department has suggested to British Government that since note as revised speaks for both governments, the British Minister might be instructed to inform Swiss Foreign Office that he supports our note rather than submitting an identical note in behalf of his government.

Note should not (repeat not) be presented until British Minister, after having received instructions from his government, shall have discussed matter with Legation.

HULL
(AAD)

44-48/388

D:EDK:HN 1/11/44 En ER VD A-L/B (Cleared with Mr. Kiser, FEA 1/10/44)

phicopy
4-1-44

Distributed to: Secretary (Mr. E.M. Bernstein); Mr. D.W. Bell (Mr. Dietrich); Mr. E.M. Bernstein-Orig.; Mr. Luxford; Mr. Able; Mr. E.M. Bernstein; Mr. Taylor; Mr. Fisher; Mr. News.

From: Mrs. Fontaine - Rm. 225

CC: Luxford, Dulles, Schmidt, Fay, Hodge, C. H. H. H.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

000727

Treasury Department
Division of Monetary Research.

Date.....February 2, 1944.....19

To: Mr. White
From: E. M. Bernstein

The American and British Governments will hand a note to the Swiss Foreign Office expressing appreciation for the generous reception given by the Swiss Government to refugees who have made their way to Switzerland. The two governments offer sympathetic consideration to proposals to ease the burden on Switzerland. Specifically, they may consent to send food-stuffs and textiles through the blockade. The effect of this note will undoubtedly be to help further transfers of refugees to Switzerland.

MR. WHITE
Branch 2058 - Room 214½

000728

Copies to:

Mr. Pehle
Mr. Luxford
Mr. DuBois
Mr. Lesser
Mr. Friedman
Mr. E. M. Bernstein
Miss Hodel

Trans. IFC (ma)

000729

Trea. IFC (Mr. Ruttle)

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMERICAN LEGATION, BERN
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: January 31, 1944
NUMBER: 624
x

FEB 7 1944

Reference Department's telegram no. 251, January 25.

An explanation of the policy expressed in the President's Executive Order requesting a statement of extent to which Swiss Government "may be prepared to ^{co} operate in this vitally important matter" and any recommendations the Swiss Government may offer as to what the United States Government can do to effectuate rescue and relief of victims of oppression with all possible rapidity is being communicated to the Foreign Minister.

copy

HARRISON

RECEIVED
FOREIGN FUNDS CONTROL
OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY

FEB 8 1944

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

A.M. PER _____ P.M.
7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 13 1972

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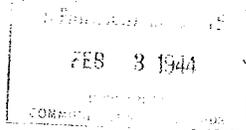
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TELEGRAM SENT

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than A Governmental
agency. (BR)

January 28, 1944
Noon

AMEMBASSY,
LONDON
479



Department and FEA agreeable to modification proposed by
MEW (your 98, January 5) in message to be communicated to Swiss
Government.

As noted in Department's 7977, December 17, communication
as originally drafted was sent to Bern for Legation's informa-
tion, but with instruction to take no action for time being.
Department's original intention was that separate notes would be
presented to the Swiss by each government. MEW revision, however,
changes form of communication to that of a joint note. That is
entirely agreeable to us and since Department has had to inform
Bern as to MEW revisions, it is suggested that rather than to
have the British Legation submit an identical note to the Swiss,
British Foreign Office may wish to instruct British Minister
to inform Swiss Government that he supports note presented by
American Legation which will speak for both governments.

Legation at Bern has been furnished revised text as set
forth your 98, but instructed to delay presentation of note
until British Minister, after having received instructions from
his government, shall have discussed matter with Legation.

854.48/388
SD:EDK:HH

1/11/44 Eu EH VE A-A
Cleared with Mr. Kiaer, FEA 1/10/44

HULL
(AAB)

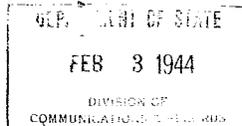
000731

2/4/44
Copies to:

Mr. Pehle
Mr. Luxford
Mr. DuBois
Mr. Schmidt
Mr. Fox
Miss Hodel
Mr. O'Flaherty

000732

COPY:DCR:AGH/



PLAIN
LONDON
Dated January 5, 1944
Rec'd 9:55 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

98, Fifth

We communicated to Foreign Office draft proposed in Department's 7977, December 17, midnight, and have a reply dated January 4 proposing a modified draft as follows for which Department's approval is requested as soon as possible in order that Foreign Office may instruct British Minister at Bern to concert action with American Minister:

"The American and British Governments are aware of and greatly appreciate the generous reception extended by the Swiss Government to the large number of refugees who have made their way to Switzerland. The time is anticipated when these refugees may be repatriated, and the British and United States Governments will cooperate in every way toward the achievement of that end. The two governments are conscious of the burden upon Swiss resources which has resulted from the care of such refugees, and will be glad to give sympathetic consideration to such proposals as the Swiss Government may wish to make toward easing the burden which such care has placed upon the economy of Switzerland. The Swiss Government may be assured that the Governments of the United Kingdom and of the United States will give as favorable consideration as may be permitted by the circumstances to requests for the purchase and extraordinary import through the blockade of additional supplies of food stuffs and textiles to relieve the burden placed on Swiss resources as a consequence of assistance extended to refugees. Reference is made in this connection to telegram 2537 of October 15, from the Department of State to the American Legation at Bern, in which mention was made of the sympathetic attitude in the United States on the part of various relief organizations and their desire to be of assistance.

The American and British Governments suggest that opportunity may be taken of the Swiss Economic Delegation's visit to London to discuss with representatives of the two governments any further questions in connection with the refugee problem which the Swiss Government may wish to raise."

WINANT

JRL

000733

T. J. Ryan

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

February 3, 1943

Miss Doherty,
Treasury, FFC

The Department's message to Bern, no. 3159, dated December 17, 1943, begins: "Reference Legation's 7242, November 19. Following telegram has been sent to London. QUOTE (Here is repeated the Department's no. 7977 to London) UNQUOTE. No action should be taken pursuant to above message until British agreement is communicated to you by Embassy, London."

DCR/G:GHKeatley:AGH
attachment

GH Keatley

000734

TELEGRAM SENT

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

December 17, 1943

Midnight

AMEMBASSY,

LONDON.

7977

From Department and FEA.

Swiss Federal Council delivered on November 16 a note to U.S. and British Legations in Bern describing the heavy burden imposed on their economy by the refugee problem and indicating that reduction in their exports may cause unemployment which will make even more difficult their aid to refugees.

Department and FEA suggest that the substance of the following communication be presented to the Swiss authorities by the British and U.S. Legations:

QUOTE The United States Government is aware of and appreciates greatly the generous reception which the Swiss Government has extended to the large number of refugees who have made their way to Swiss territory. This Government also looks forward to the time when these refugees may be repatriated and will lend its cooperation in every feasible way toward the achievement of this end.

This Government appreciates also the burden upon Swiss resources resulting from the care of these refugees and will be glad to give sympathetic consideration to such proposals as

000735

-2- #7977, DECEMBER 17, MIDNIGHT, TO LONDON

the Swiss Government may wish to make with a view to easing the burden which the care of these refugees has placed on the Swiss economy. The Swiss Government may be assured that the governments of the United States and United Kingdom will give as favorable consideration as circumstances permit to requests for the purchase and import through the blockade of additional supplies of foodstuffs and textiles to relieve the burden placed on Swiss resources by reason of assistance extended to refugees.

In this connection reference is made to the Department's telegram 2537, October 15, in which mention was made of the sympathetic attitude in this country on the part of various relief organizations and their desire to be of assistance. Funds in substantial amounts, contributed for foreign relief, are available in the United States if the Swiss Government desires to avail itself of this assistance. UNQUOTE.

If you and your British colleagues agree, please inform the Legations in Bern.

Repeated to Bern for information.

HULL
(BE)

ST:EDR:EHJ 12-16-43 EH EU VD A-I/B LA AA

000736

C
O
P
Y

Telegram Sent

October 15, 1943

AMERICAN LEGATION,

BERN.

2537

The reported influx of refugees into Switzerland, both escaped prisoners of war and fleeing civilians, has resulted in pressure in this country on the Government, Amcross, and other private relief organizations to send assistance to them.

In order that proper consideration may be given to this matter, please inform Department by telegraph:

(1) Number and nationality of refugees now estimated to be in Switzerland with separate figures as to escaped prisoners and civilian refugees.

(2) Are escaped prisoners of war interned in camps for the duration and separated from civilians?

(3) Are civilians confined to camps or at liberty?

(4) How are needs of refugees met, that is, by Swiss Government, Swiss Red Cross, private relief agencies, or through combination of these methods?

(5) Is assistance by American relief organizations desired? If so, in what form and amounts? Through what Swiss agencies should such assistance, if desired, be channeled? (Please note that this is not a commitment but merely an inquiry at this stage.)

SD:EDK:CRS:SS

840.48 Refugees/4672A

000737

C
O
P
Y

Telegram Sent

October 15, 1943

AMERICAN LEGATION,

BERN.

2537

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SD:EDK:CRB:SS

840.48 Refugees/4672A

000738

MEMORANDUM CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF EMIGRATION
FROM SWITZERLAND TO THE UNITED STATES

It would be of utmost value to relief organizations working in the refugee emigration field in Switzerland to receive some clarification from official American sources concerning the status of refugees at present in Switzerland for whom U.S. Immigration Visa Applications have been filed in Washington since the beginning of 1942 with regard to their eventual emigration to the United States. The need for such authoritative information grows daily more urgent as the possibility of the opening up of a practical exit route from Switzerland increases. Positive action in this respect by the Visa Division of the Department of State might also be of considerable political significance in that it would constitute a first practical step toward carrying out, within the limits of the existing U.S. Immigration Laws, the aim formulated by the Anglo-American Refugee Conference at Bermuda to assist neutral countries which had granted asylum to large numbers of refugees. In this respect it should be emphasized that there are at present some 20,000 foreign refugees in Switzerland, exclusive of military internees, and their number is increasing almost daily.

Between June and November of 1942 many refugees, who are at present in Switzerland, received notification through American Consulates that advisory approval on their visa applications had been received from Washington. Many of these refugees were unable to leave France or Switzerland for the United States due, on the one hand, to the withdrawal of exit visas from France for all foreign Non-Aryans on July 21st. 1942, and, on the other hand, to the occupation of the former "Zone Libre" in France in early November of the same year which cut off the transit route between Switzerland, Spain and Portugal. What will be the status of these persons with regard to receiving U.S. visas should it become practically possible for them to get out of Switzerland within the next few months? Since advisory approvals are in

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principle only valid for six months after the date of issuance it is of paramount importance both to these emigrants as well as to the relief organizations which hope to assist them that some reliable information as to the procedure which will be adopted by the Department of State in Washington be obtained. Several questions arise. What, for instance, will be the extent of the examination or reexamination of the applications and what time lapse is liable to be involved before such advisory approval can be renewed or given for the first time to persons in Switzerland? What sort and degree of "Confirmation or reaffirmation" of their sponsorship will be required of the prospective immigrant's original sponsors if, for example, initial advisory approval dates back to July 1942? Will the application as a whole be reexamined by the various boards or will the simple bringing up to date of the financial, proof of property, etc. documents suffice? Will the fact that many refugees now in Switzerland have had relatives, both close and distant, deported since July 1942 prejudice the granting of an immigration visa to the remaining member or members of the family? Will the Visa Division automatically begin examination of the applications of persons at present in Switzerland who had not yet received advisory approval up to November 1942, at which time the examination of such applications was suspended since refugees no longer had any practical possibility of leaving the country? Does the Visa Division in Washington know which applicants are now in Switzerland, since many of them may have been in France when their application was originally filed? Should such cases be drawn to the Visa Division's attention by the U.S. Consulate General in Zurich?

It is understood that emigrants are regularly able to receive U.S. visas if they are in Spain, Portugal or North Africa and leave for America. Can it therefore be assumed that the procedure of granting visas inaugurated shortly after the United States entry into the war will still be followed and will not undergo any radical changes?

000740

There is now a rapidly growing number of refugee children under 16 years of age in Switzerland who have fled here from France, Belgium and Holland since the summer of 1942 in order to avoid deportation. More continue to arrive almost daily. To cite an immediate example, between the 9th and 18th. of September 1943 close to 500 such refugee children crossed illegally into Switzerland in the Geneva area alone. At least 35% of them are without parents, the latter having been deported. Should an exit route from Switzerland open up will the 5000 emergency visas or any part thereof granted by the United States to such European children during the summer of 1942 be available for use by these children?

Geneva, Sept. 1943

Admitted to the U.S. 9/15/43

000741