

Evacuations Through Turkey, Vol. 1, Feb 1953

\*Programs with respect to Petrol and  
Rescue in R. Sugars Evacuations To and  
Through Turkey

WRB-4b

00093

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

*my T. ... file*

DATE

April 21, 1944

TO : Mr. Friedman  
FROM: Mr. Marks *my m*  
Re: Lend-lease of railroad equipment to Turkey.

At your suggestion I spoke to Mr. J. E. Harris, Jr., Chief of the Near East Section of Foreign Economic Administration. Although Mr. Harris deals primarily with preclusive purchasing in the Near East and does not claim to be an expert in lend-lease matters, he gave me the following information.

He feels that it will be almost impossible to send railroad equipment to Turkey for two reasons (a) the lack of such equipment in the Mediterranean area (b) there are only two ports in Turkey where delivery may be made and the facilities of these ports are already overtaxed.

I asked Mr. Harris whether there was not a possibility of shipping such equipment to ports further down the coast, as for example in Syria or Palestine, and then shipping such equipment overland into Turkey. I pointed out to Mr. Harris that an examination of the figures given in his memorandum to Mr. Zarky, dated April 12, 1944, makes it clear that Turkey is so desperately short of railroad equipment that even two engines together with the rolling stock which they can haul would increase the railroad facilities from Turkey to Palestine by approximately 10%.

Mr. Harris was of the view that it might be far easier to ship into Turkey motor lorries rather than railroad equipment.

Mr. Harris stated that Carl Austrian, the Foreign Economic Administration's preclusive purchasing expert in Turkey, is expected to arrive in Washington within the next ten days. He promised to arrange for me to confer with Mr. Austrian upon his arrival here.

April 21, 1944

: Mr. Friedman

: Mr. Marks

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*lsm*  
lsm:lsk 4/21/44

00094

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE April 21, 1944

TO Mr. Pehle  
FROM Mr. Hirschmann

While in Turkey, Ambassador Steinhardt and I were continually importuned by Mr. Reuben Resnik, Representative of the Joint Distribution Committee in Ankara, to secure a ship from the British and American pool to make regular trips between enemy and safe territory. Before I left, he again stated to Ambassador Steinhardt and me that he thought we had not pressed this matter sufficiently. Perhaps we hadn't. I felt that I should indicate to you his representation. You may hear further about it from the Joint Distribution Committee.

Evac. to + thru Turkey

File

LONDON

Just received desperate message Riegner most urgently calling attention gravity position Bulgarian Jews face German occupation STOP request most urgent measures secure evacuation greatest possible number to Turkey ask urgent firm intervention Turkish government requesting unconditional entry visas all Bulgarian Jews trying cross front STOP We seeing our authorities Intergovernmental Committee and trying intervention Turkish Ambassador Suggest you see Herbert Emerson Refugee Board and Turkish Ambassador.

Easterman

The above telegram was dictated over the telephone on April 13, 1944 to Mrs. Sheppe by Miss Cohen, Dr. Goldman's secretary.

00094

LONDON

April 13, 1944

Dr. Goldman

Dr. Tartakower

Following from Rigner: QUOTE From reliable sources plans German government special provision for extermination Jews numbering 800,000 by concentrating them in 3 zones STOP Plan completed within six months STOP Usual preliminary steps taken namely registration and yellow badge followed by arrest STOP Deportation places arranged similarly as in Poland STOP Suggest Jews be advised seek refuge inside and outside Hungary by all conceivable means and warned not to make same mistake as Jews in Poland and Netherlands but destroy all relevant lists communities, etc. UNQUOTE We taken action here secured promise cooperation all possible assistance. You do likewise.

Nathan Barou

Alec Easterman

~~Handwritten scribble~~

Dictated over 'phone by Miss Cohen, secretary to Mr. Goldman, to Mrs. Sheppe on 4/20/44.

*copy to  
Tupper*

Secretary Morgenthau

Mr. Gaston

Mr. Lesser

Mr. Paul

Mr. Luxford

Mr. White

Mr. Stewart

Mrs. Taylor

Mr. E.M. Bernstein

Files

Mr. DuBois

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

Miss Hodel

For files.

JWP

J. W. Pehle

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

*542 Colwell  
281-578 from Stanton  
828-576 in a...*

000945

C  
O  
P  
Y

American Embassy, Ankara,  
April 6, 1944.

MEMORANDUM TO MR. PACKER

Mr. Jacob Griffel will be calling upon you regarding the attached lists. Mr. Griffel was recommended to us through the War Refugee Board. He represents one of the Jewish organizations in Palestine. Apparently, as you will note from the attached, 400 political emergency visas appear to be available for the Rabbinical leaders mentioned therein. You will recall that you saw Mr. Griffel while here. It was suggested that we take the matter up in Istanbul with Mr. Birge. Their suggestion was that these 400 refugees would have some priority rights if they could be located and that if their names were turned over to the Turkish Foreign Office either through Mr. Maby or directly, they might be asked to give these names preference. We told Mr. Griffel that was about all that could be done at the present time but that we would try to do that which was suggested above.

I am sorry I could not clear this any further before leaving and should be grateful if you can be helpful in the matter.

I. A. Hirschmann

IAH:eb

*Mr. Hirschmann  
received*

000940

*Cons. to + Three Turkey*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE

April 5, 1944

TO Mr. Friedman

FROM Mr. Marks

The following is a summary of certain matters which you may wish to discuss with Mr. Hirschmann:

Effect of the recent Balkan developments on the refugee situation in areas adjacent to the Black Sea.

(a) Since <sup>the</sup> German invasion of the Balkans, has there been any indication of preparations to deport refugees in the Balkans to Poland?

(b) Since the German invasion of the Balkans, has the flow of refugees into Turkey continued at the rate of nine families a week from each of the three Balkan satellite countries plus 140 children and 10 adults every 10 days?

Shipping Problems

(a) Is there any possibility of having the Bulgarian ship MILKA, which has just arrived in Istanbul, used for more evacuation voyages, particularly from Constanza to Haifa? Did the MILKA sail from Constanza under auspices of the International Red Cross? Is it advisable to press discreetly and unofficially for the use of the MARITZA for similar evacuation work? (Both the MILKA and the MARITZA had previously been declared unseaworthy by the International Red Cross (Ankara No. 8)).

(b) Is there any possibility of arranging for the sale to the International Red Cross of the Rumanian ships TRANSYLVANIA and BESSARABIA if the War Refugee Board were to arrange for payment of part or of the entire purchase price? (See first paragraph of page 10 of Ambassador Steinhardt's memorandum dated February 20, 1944). Does Mr. Hirschmann have any details concerning the tonnage, type, seaworthiness, etc. of these two ships. Does he know whether the price of 1,700,000 pounds Sterling proposed in February 1944 by the Rumanian military attache in Ankara to Simond of the International Red Cross is a fair one?

(c) Is it advisable for Mr. Schwartz to reopen negotiations with the Portugese Shipping Company (WRB Ankara No. 16)?

Cutting of Red tape in the procedure for approving refugees for evacuation to Palestine and other havens.

(a) Would it be possible to save time in the <sup>British</sup> clearance procedure by consolidating steps referred to as Nos. 5 and 6 on page 3 of

10094

Mr. Hirschmann's memorandum dated March 13, 1944. Under the present procedure the British passport officer at Istanbul must transmit to the British Embassy at Ankara the weekly list of refugees authorized to enter Palestine and the Embassy in turn transmits this list to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Could not valuable time (a week) be saved if the British passport officer at Istanbul were authorized to submit the approved weekly lists directly to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs?

(b) Further valuable time (two or three weeks) could be saved if the Turkish Government automatically granted Turkish transit visas to refugees showing evidence of having been granted entry to Palestine. The Turkish objection to this would be primarily on security grounds. However, Turkish security would not be endangered if refugees in transit through Turkey were kept under strict supervision during the period of their stay in Turkey.

(c) Would it be possible to encourage the Turkish authorities to permit war refugees to cross Turkish territory en route to refugee havens by offering to make available to Turkey on a lend-lease basis railway cars and engines earmarked for refugee purposes?

(d) On page 8 of Mr. Hirschmann's memorandum there is an indication that even after the Turkish Embassy in Bulgaria had received the necessary Turkish transit visa for a particular refugee, it was necessary for this refugee to bribe a petty Turkish official in the Embassy before a visa could be had. Is this practice common? If so, would it not be advisable to advise the Turkish Government of the United States' disapproval of such bartering in human lives.

Mr. Hirschmann's recommendation of a British counterpart of the War Refugee Board.

On page 3 of his Observations, Conclusions and Recommendations, Mr. Hirschmann recommends that the British be urged to create an organization parallel to the War Refugee Board, whose representatives would enjoy diplomatic status. It might not be advisable to make such an overall recommendation to the British Government at this time, inasmuch as the British Government has already stated publicly that it has an organization within the Government empowered to deal adequately with refugee matters. It might be desirable, however, to recommend to the British that they appoint a special diplomatic representative in Turkey, or anywhere else where it may be necessary, who will spend full time working on refugee matters in cooperation with the War Refugee Board's representative in that area.

Other matters to be considered

(a) At the top of page 12 of his memorandum Mr. Hirschmann

inquires about a certain \$300,000 appropriation to cover the expenses of transporting 5,000 children from the Balkan countries to Palestine. Has someone looked into this matter?

(b) Mr. Hirschmann recommends that pressure be placed upon the Vichy Government to halt further deportations of Jews from France into Poland. Has someone worked on the various possible means of applying this pressure?

(c) Mr. Hirschmann is apparently not interested in aiding refugees to enter Turkey illegally. The illegal entrance of refugees into Turkey could be encouraged if it were discreetly mentioned to selected individuals for transmission to enemy territory that the refugees who arrived at Istanbul on the MILKA were permitted to land despite the lack of proper documents. Would such a step cause more harm than good? (See Ankara No. 15). It is highly likely that news of landing in Turkey of refugees on board the MILKA has already filtered through to the appropriate persons in enemy territory.

(d) It is apparently anticipated that there will be considerable delay before the safe conduct for the TARI can be obtained from the German Government. (Ankara No. 9). Have the methods of applying pressure on the German Government been worked out?

Do you wish me to examine into any of the problems I raised above?

*my*

**BRITISH EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.**

W.T. 1524/36/44

April 5th, 1944.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

With reference to my letter of March 23rd on the question of the possible divergence of Greek relief ships in order to pick up Jewish refugees from Roumania, we have now had further comments on this suggestion from London and Stockholm.

The Ministry of Economic Warfare point out that the schedule for Greek relief has been so precarious that even a small loss of tonnage might leave a gap in deliveries just when this could not be afforded. However, they anticipate that the position in this respect may soon become easier as a result of the addition to the Greek relief fleet which we understand has now been sanctioned by the Germans. They consider, and this is also confirmed by our Legation in Stockholm, that it would be unwise to make any actual move until the four new additions to the Greek relief fleet have actually left the Baltic, since it might well be that any approach to the Germans on this question may raise complications which might result in holding up the ships. Once the ships have left, however, the Ministry of Economic Warfare feel that it might then be possible to re-open the question in an attempt to work out plans which might make a ship available for the refugees without undue interference with the Greek relief programme, though in view of the difficulties which surround this proposition, they hope that it may in the meanwhile have been found possible to secure shipping for this purpose from other quarters.

I understand that the United States Legation in Stockholm has telegraphed further to the State Department regarding this question, and I should be grateful if you could let me know how the matter now stands as far as your Government is concerned.

Yours sincerely,



G. F. Thorold

Mr. J. Pehle,  
War Refugee Board,  
288½ Treasury Building,  
Washington, D.C.

*Discussed with  
Pehle. Advise  
refugee office  
JH*

*War Refugee Act*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington

TO: Amembassy, Ankara

DATED: April 4, 1944

NUMBER: 298

*from file  
copy on*

**CONTROL COPY**

*file*

FOLLOWING IS FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S ATTENTION.

WRB CABLE 16.

It is understood by us that you and Hirschmann have been informed by Joseph Schwartz, Lisbon JDC representative, that there is a good possibility that a Portuguese vessel may be obtained for the purpose of evacuating refugees from Constantza. We have also been informed by Schwartz that Hirschmann has advised him to suspend negotiations with the Portuguese Shipping Company until the possibilities of evacuation are definitely decided and until the question of using a Turkish vessel has been determined.

We assume that you will bear in mind the suggestion made by Schwartz and that if an occasion should develop wherein a Portuguese vessel could be used you will inform Schwartz and us.

HULL  
(GLW)

*APR 01 1944*

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

00095

March 20, 1944

Mr. Warren

Mr. Pehle

4:45 p.m.

Will you please have dispatched at once the attached cable  
to Ambassador Steinhardt, Ankara, Turkey.

(Initialed) J. W. P.

JBF:bhk - 3/29/44

JBF

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, ANKARA

We have been informed that Joseph Schwartz, JDC representative in Lisbon has advised you and Hirschmann that there is good possibility of obtaining a Portuguese ship for evacuation from Constanza. According to Schwartz, Hirschmann has advised him to hold up any negotiations with the Portuguese Shipping Company until the question of the Turkish vessel is settled and evacuation possibilities fully determined. We assume that you will keep in mind Schwartz' suggestion and if occasion arises for use of the Portuguese ship that you will advise Schwartz and ourselves accordingly.

THIS IS WRB ANKARA CABLE NO. 16

JBF:bbk - 3/29/44

BT

10045

*War Refugee Board  
Mr. Peble  
12/1/44*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington  
TO: Amembassy, London  
DATED: March 31, 1944  
NUMBER: 2516

**CONTROL COPY**

WAR REFUGEE BOARD SENDS THE FOLLOWING FOR AMBASSADOR WINANT.

There has been received from the Government of Turkey an offer to charter a Turkish ship to make a single trip for the purpose of carrying a number of refugees to Haifa from Constanza. This offer is the result of an urgent attempt to facilitate the evacuation of refugees from Rumania and long negotiations between the Government of Turkey, Ambassador Steinhardt and the War Refugee Board's representative in Ankara. The War Refugee Board has authorized immediate charter of the vessel. In order to obtain the charter the United States Government has guaranteed replacement of the Turkish ship should it be lost on the voyage. Negotiations to obtain safe conduct from the appropriate governments are being carried on at the present time.

It has been indicated by the Turkish Government that unless equivalent tonnage is chartered to them by the United States Government, the vessel referred to will make only one trip because of the shipping shortage.

The War Refugee Board  
DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

10045

-2-

The War Refugee Board is trying to meet the Turkish requirements so that the vessel will make more than one trip. The War Shipping Administration has requested Kalloch, the Mediterranean Regional Director of the War Shipping Administration, to explore the possibility that the Italians might be willing to charter to the Government of Turkey one of their vessels if arrangements for carrying out the evacuation program can be made. Kalloch, who is working through MEDBO, has asked London to request Gibson Graham, British representative on MEDBO, to help in this endeavor. We request that you communicate as soon as possible with the British Ministry of War Transport with a view to obtaining Gibson Graham's assistance in this matter.

HULL  
(GLW)

March 29, 1944

Mr. J. B. Friedman

Joseph A. Murphy

Re: Report of February 20, 1944, on Refugee Situation in Turkey

This report contains little that we have not received in some form or another in the past. It indicates, as we knew, that the Turkish Government has been quite cooperative in refugee matters. The principle difficulty seems to be the unwillingness of the Axis countries or their satellites to release refugees. Particularly is this true of Bulgaria, which in April, 1943 prohibited exit from or transit through that country of Jews from Axis Europe. This foreclosed the possibility of land exit to Turkey from Axis countries north of Bulgaria.

The report also indicates that in 1940, when the Palestinian quota was very small, Bulgarian and Rumanian promoters started a "racket" under which space on unseaworthy vessels was sold at extortionate prices in order to get refugees into Palestine illegally. Apparently this practice, which was fraught with many dangers, ceased sometime ago, probably because of the relaxation of the Palestinian quota.

  
JHMurphysdh 3/29/44

13A

Ankara,  
March 30, 1944

*File  
Copy*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE AMBASSADOR

While at Istanbul on my last trip on March 23 and 24, I took occasion to check further on the reports which have been coming to us, supplemented by the telegram from Washington, on the subject of discrimination shown to paid-up members of the Zionist Party in the issuance of exit visas from the Balkan countries and entry permits into Palestine.

I found a unanimity of opinion confirming these reports. It seems that the system works very simply. The representative of the Jewish Agency of the Balkan countries is in all instances a member of the Zionist organization. He is apparently instructed to issue the aforesaid permits and visas as follows:

- (a) Veteran Zionists.
- (b) Members of the Party.
- (c) Those showing a sympathetic interest in the cause of Zionism; and
- (d) Those outside the pale.

This order was confirmed, in confidence, by a member of the Jewish Agency who, in reply to my inquiry, said "obviously preference is given to members of the Zionist Party."

There is another point which is worth noting. Since the representative of the Jewish Agency in the Balkan countries is an important Zionist and is so chosen for this reason, those citizens wishing to leave the country who are Zionists have a direct and easy access to the representative, while outsiders have only an indirect approach. I intend to bring this matter, with the information related above, to the attention of the War Refugee Board and Mr. Paul Baerwald when I return to the US.

*New file*

IAH

L.H./m/ack

00045

*War Refugee Bd  
J.M. Keller*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington  
TO: American Embassy, Ankara  
DATED: March 28, 1944  
NUMBER: 272  
X

*File*

**CONTROL COPY**



The following is War Refugee Board's no. 8, for Hirschmann.

The information given below which the Board received, may merit investigation relative to the situation generally as well as the particular case concerned:

Attempts are being made by a father and son with name of Frankl to reach Palestine after having escaped from Slovakia <sup>4401</sup> to Hungary. Having received Palestine immigration certificates in Hungary, they have all transit visas required except Turkish, which they have been unable to obtain.

As you know, projects involving the rescue or locating of specific individual refugees are not undertaken by the Board, but we believe that this case may be a typical situation which can be taken up with the Government of Turkey.

HULL

c  
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DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

7 11 1944

MEMORANDUM

March 20, 1944

TO: MR. WARREN

FROM: MR. PELLE

12:20 p.m.

It will be appreciated if you will have the attached telegram from the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and Mr. Hirschmann in Ankara dispatched at once.

(Initialed) J.W.P.

JEF:bbk - 3/18/44

JW

10095

*Cable # 272  
3/28/44*

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT AND IRA HIRSCHMANN, ANKARA, TURKEY FROM  
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Board has received following information which may merit investigation not merely in particular case involved but as to situation generally.

According to information a father and son named Frankl have escaped from Slovakia to Hungary from where they are trying to reach Palestine. They have received in Hungary Palestine immigration certificates and all necessary transit visas except Turkish. They have been unsuccessful in obtaining Turkish transit visas.

As you know, the Board does not undertake projects limited to the seeking out and rescue of specific individuals, but this case may possibly constitute a type situation which can be taken up with Turks.

THIS IS WRB ANKARA CABLE NO. 8

JB7  
*JW*  
JBF:bbk - 3/18/44

*War Refugee Bd  
(Mr. Pille)*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

*Copy only*

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara  
TO: Secretary of State, Washington  
DATED: March 28, 1944  
NUMBER: 554  
X

**CONTROL COPY**

Following is Ankara's 12 for WRB from Hirschmann.

You are informed that the proposals discussed in the Department's cable of March 17, no. 214, received today concerning ships are dealt with fully in our previous telegrams referring especially to my messages of March 15, as 455 and 458.

It is assumed that the Board is looking for means so that it can take advantage of the offer of the Turk Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that if the Turk Red Crescent is donated a vessel by the American Government, its operation will be permitted by the Government of Turkey under the Turk flag for the purpose of evacuating refugees from Balkan ports for the duration of the war, thereafter the vessel to remain the property of the Turk Red Crescent.

STEINHARDT

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

00096

MAR 27 1944

My dear Admiral Land:

Thank you very much for the real assistance which you have given to the War Refugee Board in connection with the many shipping problems which it has encountered. As you know, shipping is one of the most urgent matters with which the Board must deal in its efforts to save the lives of innocent people. Your speedy and wholehearted cooperation in aiding our efforts to obtain ships for the evacuation of refugees to Turkey, and your help generally in these matters, has given us hopes of success in our endeavors.

I also sincerely appreciate your making available to the Board the valuable assistance of Lt. Commander Arthur M. Becker, Mr. Myron Black and others of your staff.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) H. Morgenthau, Jr.

Secretary of the Treasury

Honorable Emory S. Land,  
War Shipping Administrator,  
Washington 25, D. C.

JHM:JBF:lab 3/25/44

JBF

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Date

March 23, 1944

TO Mr. Pehle

FROM Mr. Friedman

I believe that Secretary Morgenthau should call Admiral Land on the telephone along the lines indicated in the attached note. We are currently clearing through War Shipping the question of getting a guarantee for the SS TARI in place of the guarantee we gave in the case of SS VATAN. While Becker thinks that Land will not balk at this transaction, he does feel that the effects of the Stettinius call are beginning to wear off and that Land may possibly be becoming a little shaky. In this case a call from the Secretary would do a great deal to restore the situation. I think this call should be made as soon as possible.

JBF

1. Secretary Morgenthau greatly appreciates the whole-hearted cooperation which Admiral Land has been giving to the War Refugee Board in trying to obtain ships to evacuate refugees to Turkey. Since shipping is one of the principal problems that faces the War Refugee Board, the importance of Admiral Land's assistance cannot be over-estimated. Admiral Land's staff and particularly Lt. Com. Becker have been extremely helpful in working out the details of particular transactions.

2. Admiral Land, of course, realizes the great importance of effecting immediate evacuation of refugees from Rumania in view of recent military developments in that area. As the Admiral knows, we have been dealing back and forth with the Turks for boats and in this kind of negotiation there have necessarily been proposals and counter-proposals. The Secretary is sorry that we have had to come back several times to Land on this problem but it has been inevitable in the nature of things. We have now been informed that the Turks have placed a boat at our disposal. Since this ship is different from the SS VATAN whose replacement was guaranteed by the War Shipping, it will be necessary to trouble Land to renew the guarantee in the case of the new boat. The Secretary will greatly appreciate Land's cooperation in this matter since, of course, time is of the essence.

401

W. R. B.  
Filing Authority

**BRITISH EMBASSY**  
**WASHINGTON, D. C.**

No. Ans. Req.   
March 23rd 1944.  
Date

Dear John:

Following our recent talk, I referred back to London the question of the possibility of diverting one of the Greek relief ships to pick up Jewish refugees in Constanza. I have not yet had any definite reply on this, except for a telegram informing me that the matter is receiving urgent consideration, but I think I should warn you that a telegram from Stockholm to London, ~~and~~ which has been repeated here, shows that the opinion of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also of the American and British Legations, is very definitely opposed to the proposition. I understand that the U.S. Minister has telegraphed to the State Department to this effect, and you are no doubt already in possession of his views on the matter.

I will let you know further as soon as I have any definite news from London.

Yours sincerely,



G. F. Thorold.

Mr. J. Pehle,  
War Refugee Board, Treasury Department,  
Washington, D.C.

11

*U. S. Refugee Bd  
Mr. Pills  
copy 0*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON  
TO: AMEMBASSY, ANKARA  
DATED: MARCH 17, 1944  
NUMBER: 214  
x

**CONTROL COPY**



Following is War Refugee Board's cable no. 5 to Ankara for Hirschmann's attention.

*(380?)*

Your cable of March 3, 1944, no. 80 is referred to herewith.

We greatly appreciate the splendid cooperation Ambassador Steinhardt has given you. Also we appreciate your suggestions for action, your reports and the steps being taken by you and the Ambassador. We will keep you currently informed of our progress in following up the points made by you.

1. Negotiations are being continued by us with the Government of Sweden in an attempt to obtain its agreement to make vessels for this project available. The immediate prospects in this connection are not encouraging but you will be informed of the developments as they take place.

We still believe that all possible steps should be taken to obtain Turkish vessels. Tentative consideration is being given to a plan whereby the United States Government would make a vessel available to the Government of Turkey at once if, in your opinion, the Government of Turkey would immediately make available an equal amount of tonnage for the purpose of evacuating refugees in accordance with the program which the

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

Board

00096

Board has formulated. It is requested that you inform us whether such an offer from this Government would, in your opinion, make a Turkish vessel for refugee work available quickly. As soon as we receive from you a positive indication that such an arrangement as suggested above would be of substantial help, we will take this matter up with the appropriate authorities. Your reply will be awaited before approaching the War Shipping Administration or other appropriate government agencies. We request your urgent advice.

2. If arrangements which are satisfactory to you and Ambassador Steinhardt can be made, the necessary funds will be forthcoming to buy the Turkish vessel SS NECAT for about \$400,000, it being understood that the vessel will be donated to the Turkish Red Crescent. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has indicated an interest in furnishing the purchase price of the ship if it appears reasonably certain that the vessel will be able to transport from Rumania to Palestine the 5,000 Jewish children as indicated in your reference cable. The JDC has inquired whether they will have to bear the additional expenses involved in transporting the children, such as wages, cost of fuel, et cetera. We concur with your suggestion that it would be most desirable to try to obtain the Turkish Government's consent to continue the ship in operation for the purpose of transporting additional refugees after the 5,000 children have been transported as planned.

It is

00096

-3-

It is further suggested by us that you get in touch with Mr. Resnick, representative in Turkey for J.D.C., in connection with this project.

HULL

4/10/44  
11. 10:00  
If re

MAR 10 1944  
18:10 P.M.

TO: Mr. George L. Warren  
FROM: J. W. Pehle

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

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J.H.Murphy:dh 3/9/44

00096

214  
3/17/44  
TO DIRECTOR FOR INFORMATION

This is WRB Cable to Ankara No. \_\_\_\_\_ Please refer to your No. 80 of March 3, 1944.

We very much appreciate the excellent and active cooperation which Ambassador Steinhardt has found it possible to give you. We are likewise most appreciative of the steps which he and you are taking as well as your full reports and suggestions for action. We are actively following up the points made by you and will keep you promptly and currently advised of our progress.

1. As previously indicated, we are continuing our negotiations with representatives of the Swedish Government in an effort to secure its agreement to supply ships for this work. Up to now, however, our immediate prospects are not encouraging. We will advise you of any further developments in this picture.

We still feel it most desirable to take all steps possible to secure Turkish ships. At the present we have under tentative (repeat tentative) consideration a plan by which this Government would make a ship available to the Turkish Government at once, provided in your opinion the Turkish Government would be willing immediately to make available an equal amount of tonnage for the evacuation of refugees in accordance with the Board's program. Please advise us whether you feel that such an offer on the part of this Government would result in quickly making available a Turkish ship for refugee work. If we receive a strong indication from you that such an arrangement would be a substantial help, we will immediately take the matter up with the appropriate authorities of this Government.

We have not (repeat not) yet taken the matter up with the War Shipping Administration or other appropriate agencies of the Government and will await your reply before doing so. Please advise urgently

2. If arrangements satisfactory to you and Ambassador Steinhardt can be made for the purchase of the "S.S. NECAT", at a cost of approximately \$400,000, the vessel to be donated to the Turkish Red Crescent to become its property, the necessary funds will be forthcoming. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has manifested an interest in furnishing the purchase price of this ship on condition that it appear reasonably clear that the boat will be able to complete the transportation of the 5000 Jewish refugee children from Rumania to Palestine as indicated in your cable under reference. The J.D.C., however, wishes to know whether it will have to pay the necessary additional expenses, such as those for wages, fuel, et cetera, which may be involved in transporting these children. We all agree with your view that it would be most desirable to press the Turkish Red Crescent to continue the vessel in operation to carry additional refugees after the agreement to transport the 5000 children has been carried out.

It is suggested that you contact Mr. Reunick, J.D.C. representative in Turkey, with respect to this matter.

JHMurphy:dh 3/9/44

C  
O  
P  
Y

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara  
TO: Secretary of State, Washington  
DATED: March 15, 1944  
NUMBER: 455  
x

FROM HIRSCHMANN FOR THE ATTENTION OF PEHLI:

This morning Ambassador Steinhardt and the Foreign Minister held a personal conference and as a result the latter definitely committed the Turk Government to making available to the Ambassador as a personal courtesy a Turk passenger vessel with a capacity for carrying 1500 people, to make a single trip as soon as possible, to and from Constanza to evacuate refugees of Jewish nationality. I have been informed by the Ambassador that the Foreign Minister gave the necessary instructions in his presence to the Minister of Communications by telephone. As they are both cargo vessels, it would appear from the Minister's promise of a passenger vessel that neither the VATAN nor the NECAT will be used. Valuable time will be saved by placing a passenger instead of a cargo vessel at our disposal as refitting of a cargo vessel for passenger service in this area would involve inordinate delay in view of shortage of material and labor available for that purpose.

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972 The Ambassador

000970

The Ambassador was informed by Numan that as the vessel being placed at his disposal was one of the very few ships available to the Turk Government for its vital commerce it could not continue to evacuate refugees from Balkan ports after the trip in question unless the United States Government made available to the Turk Government a substitute vessel by the time of termination of the initial trip. It was categorically stated by him that if the United States Government would make a ship available on a loan basis to the Turk Government by the time the initial trip is completed, he would put it in operation to carry Turk commerce after placing the Turk flag on the vessel so loaned.

By this means he would be permitting the vessel assigned to us for the initial trip to make further trips to Balkan ports to evacuate refugees, but that failing, a substitute vessel only as in the voyage to and from Constanza could be permitted. Because of the desperate situation in which the Turk Government finds itself for lack of ships, he added that no amount of money could be accepted in lieu of a substitute vessel and that if we desired the ship about to be made available to us to make repeated trips it would be necessary, as soon as possible, to provide a substitute vessel. Numan

referred

referred to the fact that even a single voyage to and from Constanza represented a genuine sacrifice on the part of the Turk Government. If the representatives of the International Red Cross encountered new difficulties in regard to obtaining safe conduct for the vessel, the Foreign Minister agreed, at the conclusion of their talk, to intervene with the German Ambassador in Ankara.

The foregoing information has been communicated to Binond, of the International Red Cross who is at once taking up the matter of safe conduct for the vessel with the belligerents.

Barlas of the Jewish agency has also been informed by me of the imperative necessity of having the refugees available at the port of Constanza on the arrival of the vessel so that there may be no undue delay.

Incumbent upon us is the burden to continue this Turk vessel in regular operation for the evacuation of refugees by the prompt loan to the Turk Government of an American vessel in substitution therefor, as we have now reached a point at which the Turk Government has given evidence of its willingness to cooperate by placing one of the very few vessels available to it at our disposal for the first trip. After the first trip has been completed by a Turk vessel it will be (\*) if not impossible to persuade the Turk Government that the United States Government with its large merchant fleet and construction

of over

000974

of over 1,500,000 tons per month is not in a position to provide one vessel of 6,000 to 7,000 tons to evacuate refugees which it desires to rescue. I have no doubt that such a vessel would be made available promptly if it were possible for an American vessel to proceed to Constanza. Satisfactory explanation to the Turk Government why an American vessel unable to proceed to Constanza should not be placed at the disposal of the Turkish Government while its vessel undertakes the regular and continued evacuation of the refugees, would for this reason be difficult.

STEINHARDT

(\*) Apparent omission.

DOR:MA:EA

3-17-44

*War Refugee Board  
Mr. Peble*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara  
TO: Secretary of State, Washington  
DATED: March 16, 1944  
NUMBER: 458

*47152  
to Mr. Peble*

**CONTROL COPY**

Reference is made herein to my cables of March 3,  
no. 380 and 455, dated March 15.

Reference was made in my conversation this morning  
with the Minister for Foreign Affairs to my previous  
conversation with the Minister of Communications concerning  
the possibility of the purchase by the War Refugee Board  
of the SS NECAT at a cost of approximately \$400,000, the  
vessel to be donated to the Turkish Red Crescent and to  
become its property after completing the transportation to  
Palestine of 5,000 Jewish refugee children from Rumania  
under auspices of the International Red Cross. In reply  
Numan stated that the Minister of Communications had dis-  
cussed the subject with him and that as the Turkish Govern-  
ment had now agreed to make a passenger vessel available  
to me at once, to withdraw a second vessel from the very  
few ships at the disposal of the Turkish Government would  
be impossible. Numan added that there was some question  
as to whether the Red Crescent could accept the donation  
of a vessel under the conditions suggested by me. Inquiry

~~was then~~

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

000970

was then made by me as to whether he could devise a means whereby the Red Crescent could operate a vessel under the Turkish flag for the continuous evacuation from Balkan ports of Jewish refugees. Later in the day the Foreign Minister telephoned me and said that he had obtained the consent of the Council of Ministers to proposing that the American Government donate a vessel to the Turkish Red Crescent which would undertake to operate it under the Turkish flag for the purpose of evacuating refugees from Balkan ports during the continuance of the war, the vessel thereafter to remain the property of the Red Crescent.

Hirschmann and I recommend that the foregoing proposal be accepted and in considering this proposal the War Refugee Board may wish to bear in mind the present exorbitant cost per capita of evacuating refugees either by rail or sea from the Balkans. The cost of evacuating a few thousand refugees, at the existing rates, from the Balkans to Turkey or Palestine by sea would probably be as much as the value of the ship on which they were carried which would clearly justify its donation.

The Department's instructions in this matter will be appreciated.

STEINHARDT.

Official File Copy

March 13, 1944

Dear Morris:

The attached cable from  
Hirschmann is for your confidential  
information.

Very truly yours,

*151 John*

J. W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Morris Ernst,  
285 Madison Avenue,  
New York, New York.

Enclosure

*JAT*

100970

*Fries*

**TREASURY DEPARTMENT**

**INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION**

**DATE** March 9, 1944

**TO :** Messrs. Pehle, DuPois, and Friedman

**FROM:** J. H. Murphy

*Wanted  
JHM*

I called Lt. Commander Becker on the problems we discussed in your office this afternoon.

1. With respect to the necessary clearances in transferring a ship to the Turks in return for which they would make an equivalent amount of tonnage available for refugee work, Becker said that he saw no legal reason why this would have to be cleared through the Joint or Combined Chiefs of Staff, so long as we confine our negotiations to just any ship, and not a special one. However, he called my attention to the memorandum which he had given you on the matter of ship procurement and pointed out that, by a specific exchange of letters between Admiral Land and the President, it was impossible to transfer any ship without clearance from the White House. Knowing the situation in the White House you will appreciate how this could become a matter for the Chiefs of Staff.

Becker was of the opinion that we should discuss the matter with Lend Lease before cabling Hirschmann, on the theory that Lend Lease could tell us whether it would be possible at all. Becker said the recent press comments on the change of attitude toward Turkey may well have altered the situation from what it was when we first approached Lend Lease on the "VATAN". I told him your views with respect to discussing the matter prior to cabling Hirschmann, and read him the cable to Hirschmann. He suggested the inclusion of a clause to the effect that this matter has not yet been discussed with WSA, and I have inserted it in the cable.

Becker felt that the best approach on this matter, tentatively, was, on the basis of our reply from Hirschmann, to approach Lend Lease and get their approval. Then we might raise the matter with him for the purpose of getting a statement to the effect that Admiral Land had no objections. At this point we might approach the White House.

In this connection Becker advised me very confidentially that WSA had 4 or 5 old "tubs" which it was trying to sell and that these might be available for our purposes, if and when. At this point he wanted to check with the General Counsel of WSA to be sure that these "tubs" had not already been spoken for and that it would be all right to indicate that they were available. I suggested that we leave the matter on an entirely unofficial basis at this time. Accordingly he will regard it as such and not mention it to anyone.

2. I also told Becker that anything he could do to help us on procuring Swedish ships, particularly by approaching the British Ministry of War Transport, would be very much appreciated. He said he would be glad to do so but would like to have someone from our office call on him Monday and he will arrange a conference at which one of us could sit in.

Both Admiral Land and Commander Becker will be out of town over the weekend.

*J.A.M.*

cc: DuBois, Friedman

100980

March 9, 1944

: Messrs. Pehle, DuPois, and Friedman  
: J. H. Murphy

I called Lt. Commander Becker on the problems we discussed in your office this afternoon.

1. With respect to the necessary clearances in transferring a ship to the Turks in return for which they would make an equivalent amount of tonnage available for refugee work, Becker said that he saw no legal reason why this would have to be cleared through the Joint or Combined Chiefs of Staff, so long as we confine our negotiations to just any ship, and not a special one. However, he called my attention to the memorandum which he had given you on the matter of ship procurement and pointed out that, by a specific exchange of letters between Admiral Land and the President, it was impossible to transfer any ship without clearance from the White House. Knowing the situation in the White House you will appreciate how this could become a matter for the Chiefs of Staff.

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Both Admiral Land and Commander Becker will be out of town over the weekend.

JSM

JHMurphy:dh 3/9/44

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

INTER OFFICE COMMUNICATION

*JBF*  
*10-1-44*

Date

March 9, 1944

TO Mr. Pehle  
FROM Mr. Friedman

When you see Mr. Thorold of the British Embassy I assume you will broach the matter of diverting relief ships to the evacuation program. We will then be in a position to see whether we wish to go to Lend-Lease for pressure on the British or other help. If this possibility appears hopeless we may then ask our Minister in Sweden to explore the possibility of having the Swedish Government use other Swedish ships now in the Baltic for this purpose. I believe we should probably not enter into this second negotiation until we have made up our minds about the first.

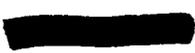
*JBF Friedman*

10099

*War Refugee Bd*  
*W. P. Reilly*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON  
TO: AMEMBASSY, ANKARA ✓  
DATED: March 9, 1944  
NUMBER: 180  
x



War Refugee Board sends the following for Hirschmann.  
We have requested Myron Black, the field director of War Shipping Administration's Foreign Service Division, who is now in Cairo, to proceed immediately to Ankara to survey with you the entire shipping situation. Although Mr. Black can remain in Turkey only a few weeks, he will arrange to have someone detailed permanently to Ankara from the Cairo office if it is deemed necessary.

Please inform us at once of any and all developments regarding shipping problems. This problem is a most important one and it is hoped that we can solve it with the assistance of the War Shipping Administration which has been most helpful.

STETTINIUS

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

000984

RECEIVED  
DATE: 1/10/50  
BY: [illegible]

Miss Chauncey  
Mr. Paul  
Mr. H. D. White  
Mr. Pehle  
Mr. Luxford  
Mr. DuBois  
Mr. E. H. Bernstein  
Mr. Stewart  
Mr. Lesser  
Mr. Friedman  
Miss Hodel  
Mr. Pollak  
Mr. Bundy  
*Mr. Abrahamson*  
*Miss Laughlin*  
*Mrs. Kahn*

March 3, 1944

3:30 p.m.

TO: Mr. Warren

FROM: Mr. Pehle

It will be appreciated if you have the attached cable from the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and Hirschmann in Ankara dispatched immediately.

Attachment.

*JED*

JEDuBois:ecr  
3/3/44

000980

# 180 - 3/9/44

URGENT

C A B L E

THIS IS WRB CABLE ANKARA NO. 2

TO HIRSCHMANN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

The War Shipping Administration has requested Myron Black, who is field director of their Foreign Service Division, to proceed immediately from Cairo to Ankara to survey with you the entire shipping situation. Mr. Black will be unable to remain in Turkey for more than a few weeks but if necessary will then arrange to have someone assigned permanently from the Cairo office to Ankara.

Please keep in close touch with us on all developments on the shipping problem. The War Shipping Administration has been most cooperative and with their help we hope to be able to solve this most important problem.

*JED*  
JEDuBois:ecr  
3/3/44

000987

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Stockholm  
TO: Secretary of State, Washington  
DATED: March 7, 1944  
NUMBER: 764

The Legation has been informed by the Foreign ministry that the War Refugee Board recently approached the Swedish Government on two occasions relative to Swedish assistance in rescuing Jewish children from Southeastern Europe. The board's representative in Ankara made the first approach to the Swedish Minister there and this was followed up by an approach to the Swedish Minister in Washington by Mr. Pehle, the board's director. On both occasions it was urgently requested by the board that permission be given for one of the Greek relief ships which call at Salonika to proceed to Constanza and take on board from eight hundred to one thousand Jewish children for transportation to Istanbul. It was understood that the Turk Government is willing to permit transit through Turkey, presumably en route to Palestine and the intention was to make an urgent approach to German, Bulgarian, Rumanian, and Hungarian Governments to allow the children to leave if the shipping question could be agreed upon in principle.

The chairman of the Swedish Shipping Committee was consulted by Mr. Thyberg of the Foreign Ministry and the chairman remarked that Greek relief ships are not fitted for accommodation of passengers. Mr. Thyberg realizes that this objection may be minor in the circumstances. Instructions have given to the Swedish Legation in Washington to suggest that the matter be taken up with other American and British agencies concerned by the War Refugee Board.

Without taking into account the fact that German consent still is lacking for three additional vessels to enter Greek relief traffic in order to transport increases granted recently (see my telegram of January 28, 1944, No. 291), ordinary deliveries from Ganda to Greece have fallen behind. It is felt by the Swedish Foreign Ministry and by the British Legation that any extraneous delay in the shipping schedule for Greek relief must have serious and deplorable effect and this Legation agrees.

Johnson  
cc: Sec'y(orig.), Abrahamson, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Gaston, Hodel, McCormack, Friedman, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Raines, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Files.

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

1944  
MAR 29 1943

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Dr. Schwartz was received from Lisbon under date of March 27, 1944:

"Your March 20, 5 p.m. Ira Hirschmann advises Turkish vessel has now been promised for Balkan evacuation therefore suggests we take no steps connection Portuguese steamer until number of refugees available for embarkation Constanza determined. Resnik informs us Turkish vessel for one trip Constanza to Haifa will involve cost approximately \$250,000 for 800 children and urges you provide funds War Refugee Board this purpose. Understand Hirschmann concurs this suggestion. Please discuss immediately with Pehle and advise."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle  
Executive Director

Mr. M. A. Leavitt,  
Secretary,  
American Jewish Joint  
Distribution Committee,  
270 Madison Avenue,  
New York 16, New York.

*Handed to Mr. Leavitt  
by Miss Bennett*

FH:lab 3/29/44

**CONTROL COPY**

*2 - War Refugee Bd (Mr. Belle)*

MO - 406  
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (BR)

Lisbon  
Dated March 27, 1944  
Rec'd 9:02 p.m.

*Answered by Leavitt. JB7*

Secretary of State  
Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

918, March 27, 6 p.m.

Following message is for War Refugee Board for transmission to Moses Leavitt, Joint Distribution Committee, New York City.

"Your March 20, 5 p.m. Ira Hirschmann advises Turkish vessel has now been promised for Balkan evacuation therefore suggests we take no steps connection Portuguese steamer until number of refugees available for embarkation Constanza determined. Tesnik informs us Turkish vessel for one trip Constanza to Haifa will involve cost approximately \$250,000 for 300 children and urges you provide funds War Refugee Board this purpose. Understand Hirschmann concurs this suggestion. Please discuss immediately with Pehle and advise".

Signed Schwartz.

NO. WEB

EMB

000990

*W. J. P. ...  
(Mrs. Pehle)*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara  
TO: Secretary of State, Washington  
DATED: March 4, 1944  
NUMBER: 388

X  
[REDACTED]  
FOLLOWING FOR PEHLE FROM HIRSCHMAN.

There arrived today in Istanbul the first group of Jewish children from Bulgaria and on Monday they leave for Aleppo by train for Jerusalem.

Bulgarian and Gestapo officials and bureaucratic delays help up certificates of release for these children for 8 months. It is our belief that this constitutes the beginning of a fairly continuous movement of children provided new obstacles do not interfere. We were assured today by Turkish authorities that they have issued instructions for 140 children with 10 adults to pass from Rumania through Turkey in two groups of 75 each every 10 days until further notice.

In the last 10 days ninety refugees came from Bulgaria via Istanbul to Palestine in addition to the above. Furthermore, seventy-four refugees came to Izmir from Greece. The stoppage in refugee movement through Turkey which had existed since the first of January has been overcome. We are now directing our efforts towards increasing the

movement

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

000991

movement. We are hopeful of obtaining steadily increasing results with the War Refugee Board's continuing uncompromising support of our daily efforts. Moreover, a solution in Turkey of a more difficult and complex situation than can possibly be understood in Washington could serve as a formula for other parts of the world where similar humanitarian efforts are being made by the Board.

This morning Ambassador Steinhardt was notified by the Foreign Office that the immediate charter of the SS VATAN for a single voyage from Constanza was approved in principle by the Foreign Office and that at the earliest possible moment the matter would be submitted with a favorable recommendation to the Council of Ministers (the equivalent of our cabinet) without the approval of which no vessel may be chartered.

The Ambassador was further informed by the Foreign Office that they had taken this action as a personal courtesy to him subject to the understanding that if the vessel is desired for additional trips it will be necessary for the Ambassador to discuss with the Foreign Office reimbursement for the financial loss resulting from the Turkish Government's continued sacrifice of one of the very few ships which it has available for carrying its products.

It is estimated

It is estimated by us that on each trip the SS VATAN should be able to carry a maximum of eight-hundred and a minimum of six-hundred refugees. As yet we have received no information concerning changes which may have to be made in the vessel to accomodate passengers since it is a freighter. A substantial agreement has been reached with the owner as regards the charter price. However, there will be the matter of obtaining from the Russian and German Governments safe conduct for the vessel and attempts to obtain this through Geneva are being made by the International Red Cross representative here. Information regarding the progress of this matter will be sent to you.

STEINHARDT

NO. 12  
MAY 1942  
IF THIS IS

Executive Office of the President  
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

FROM: Mr. W. Stewart

Room 480

TO: Mr. Pehle

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Abrahamson | <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. B. King           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miss Alexander | <input type="checkbox"/> Miss Laughlin          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Cohn      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Lesser             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. DuBois     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Luxford            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Friedman   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Mann               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miss Hodel     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Marks              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. McCormack  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mr. Stewart |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Murphy     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Taylor            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Parke      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. Towler            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Pollak     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. White              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. Smith      |   |

11 11 19 42

WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON

March 2, 1944

27  
W. R. B. \_\_\_\_\_  
Filing Authority  
To: Files  
Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
No. Ans. Req. \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial EBB  
Date 3/14/44

Mr. John W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director  
War Refugee Board  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear John:

Attached hereto is a reply from Admiral Land to your letter of March 2, together with a copy of the cable sent to Myron Black, who is expected to arrive in Cairo on the 3d for a stay of three days.

Black should be able to leave for Ankara by about the 5th or 6th and I presume get there within a day or two.

Sincerely yours,

*Arthur*

Arthur M. Becker  
Lt. Comdr., USNR  
Assistant General Counsel

Enclosures

WAR SHIPPING ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON

ADMINISTRATOR

MAR 2 - 1944

Mr. John W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director  
War Refugee Board  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

This is in reply to your letter of March 2, 1944.

Mr. Myron Black, who is Field Director, Foreign Service Division of the War Shipping Administration, is at present in Cairo. I thought it would be best for us to ask Mr. Black to proceed to Ankara to survey the situation and to advise Mr. Hirschmann as to the shipping problems involved. Should this problem extend more than a few weeks, Mr. Black will be unable to remain in Turkey, but in that event, I have asked him to arrange for someone to be assigned from the Cairo office.

I enclose herewith a copy of the cable I have transmitted to Mr. Black.

Sincerely yours,



E. S. Land  
Administrator

Enclosure

7 11 0 9 9 10

C A B L E G R A M

March 2, 1944

To Myron Black, WSA, c/o Regional Office, Cairo, Egypt

REFERENCE 192 TO ROBINSON. WAR REFUGEE BOARD URGENTLY IN NEED OF SHIPPING EXPERT TO ADVISE HIRSCHMANN, ITS REPRESENTATIVE IN ANKARA, CONCERNING PROBLEM OF EVACUATING REFUGEES FROM RUMANIA TO TURKEY. TWO PROJECTS NOW IN VIEW: (1) TURKISH GOVERNMENT MAY MAKE SS VATAN AVAILABLE FOR THIS TRANSPORTATION. WSA HAS ALREADY MADE COMMITMENT TO REPLACE VATAN AS LEASE TRANSACTION IF VESSEL IS MADE AVAILABLE AND LOST. (2) IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO SECURE NEUTRAL SWEDISH TONNAGE FOR THIS PURPOSE.

IT HAS ALSO BEEN SUGGESTED TO HIRSCHMANN THAT HE ATTEMPT TO SECURE OTHER TURKISH SHIPS. PLEASE COOPERATE WITH HIM AND MAKE ANY SUGGESTIONS YOU THINK DESIRABLE DIRECTLY TO HIM, KEEPING THIS OFFICE ADVISED. PLEASE PROCEED TO ANKARA AND ADVISE HIRSCHMANN. IF APPARENT THAT SHIPPING ADVICE WILL BE NEEDED FOR PROTRACTED PERIOD, PLEASE ARRANGE WITH ROBINSON TO SEND SOMEONE FROM HIS OFFICE TO REPLACE YOU. THIS CABLE IS SENT AT SUGGESTION OF McPHERSON.

Signed: E. S. Land

LAND

AMBecker/mab

cc: Mr. Pehle  
Mr. Becker

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (B)  
Commerce Dept. letter, 11-15-72  
By RHP, NARS Date 1-16-73

*Prepared by Hirschmann  
re Hirschmann - but presented  
from Hirschmann*

*9/16  
Fardest  
Filing*

March 2, 1944.

From Hirschmann to Pehle.

Your prompt action to my telegrams Nos. has been most encouraging and gratifying. You have done a fine job and I am proud to be your representative here.

Your telegram No. 146 of February 25th, 7 p.m. is comprehensive and to the point as to the Board's program, but unfortunately there is a fly in the ointment in that telegram. I cannot from this end guess whether this paradox emanates from you or another Department. The fact is that the telegram contains the following paragraph: "It is of course appreciated by the Department that your own activities regarding this matter may be somewhat restricted by the terms of the Department's telegram to you of February 7, 7 p.m., No. 103, and that you may have to arrange for the principal initiatives to be taken by Hirschmann. In this regard you should of course use your best judgment. It will be realized by you, the Department appreciates, that these negotiations are on a level entirely different than those relative to Turkey's role in the war, and that the Government of the United States is simply addressing to the Government of Turkey, as to other governments, a humanitarian appeal, rather than a request that they take certain action favorable to us at some sacrifice to themselves."

I trust that you will appreciate that notwithstanding the fact that I have been invested with diplomatic status, the only person empowered to negotiate with the Turkish Prime Minister or the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, or with the British Ambassador on the subject of war refugee work, is Ambassador Steinhardt.

Now, when the War Refugee Board was formed and composed of the Secretaries of State, War and Treasury, I was convinced that this was strictly a U.S. Government Department that can speak on behalf of the Government and make demands and requests on its behalf from other Governments, through the accredited Ambassador, provided of course that such demands and requests are both reasonable and feasible. But the paragraph from your telegram No. 146 of February 25th, quoted above, leads me to believe (and it is so specific that it cannot be otherwise interpreted) that our efforts are to be confined to an appeal to the humanitarian feelings of the Turks. In the three weeks that I have spent here I have had time to convince myself that unless we can approach the Turkish Government in the same manner employed to obtain concessions from it as is used for other U.S. Government matters or in connection with these matters, our chances of success are less than slight.

Ambassador

Ambassador Steinhardt has been completely cooperative and has thrown himself into this work wholeheartedly and I have no doubt that he will continue to give us his complete help and support. But I appreciate that he is the U.S. Ambassador to Turkey and as such has manifold duties and problems related to high diplomacy and political matters. While Ambassador Steinhardt does in no way consider the work for the War Refugee Board as secondary, nevertheless and especially in view of the paragraph quoted from the telegram No. 146 of February 25th, he cannot make demands or requests from the Turkish authorities as he would were his instructions such that he has to regard the activities on behalf of the War Refugee Board as a fully Government matter and not just a plea for humanitarianism. Ambassador Steinhardt is a humanitarian but he cannot convert the Turks to be humanitarians.

To sum up, if we are to deal with the Turkish Government in a way that should be effective and obtain results quickly the War Refugee Board must be looked upon as a full-fledged Government Department doing essential war work, and that any demand and request made on its behalf must carry the same weight as if made on behalf of the State, War and Treasury Departments or all. Failing to acquire such authority for the Board you may be able in time to accomplish little things here and there but never a worthwhile, outstanding piece of rescue work on a large scale for which a deplorable heart-rending situation cries. In order to obtain action from the Turks now, we must be able to deal with them formally and officially and not on a basis of asking favors or putting up pleas for mercy.

2000  
to  
H. H. H. H. H.

MAR 2 1944

To : Mr. George L. Warren

From: J. W. Pehle

I should appreciate it very much  
if the attached telegram were despatched  
promptly to our representative in Ankara.

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J.H.Murphy:dh 2/29/44  
887

001000

TO STEINHARDT FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

We are endeavoring to secure the temporary assignment to you of a shipping expert presently employed by the War Shipping Administration and stationed in Cairo. We will advise you as to the results of our negotiations.

Representatives of the War Shipping Administration in Washington have informed us that the "S.S. Izmir", a former passenger ship now traing between Greece and Turkey, might possibly be obtained for the purpose of evacuation. It is suggested that you canvas the potentialities of acquiring this ship and advise us.

JAM: JB7 JWP  
JEMurphy sdh 2/29/44

TELEGRAM SENT

PLAIN

War Refugee Board

March 1, 1944

AMBASSY,

AFKARI.

155, First

FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Refer your 844 of February 26 greatly encouraged your news on transportation Jewish refugee children from Bulgaria to Palestine via Turkey. Congratulations and keep up the good work. Trust this is only the beginning.

STEFANINIUS  
ACTING  
(GLW)



WFB:GLU:KG  
3/1/44

February 29, 1944

To: Mr. Warren  
From: J. W. Pehle

Please transmit the attached cable from  
the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and  
Hirschmann, Ankara, Turkey.

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

JWP:mgt 2/29/44

*JWP*

CABLE TO STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMANN, ANKARA, TURKEY.  
FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Refer your 344 of February 26 greatly encouraged your news on transportation Jewish refugee children from Bulgaria to Palestine via Turkey. Congratulations and keep up the good work. Trust this is only the beginning.

*JMT*

GM-202

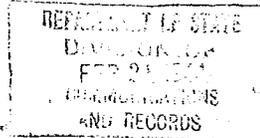
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated February 26, 1944

Rec'd 8:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.



344, February 26, 5 p.m.

FOR THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD FROM HIRSCHMANN

Since telegraphing you last we have broken the bottleneck for the land transport of Jewish refugee children from Bulgaria to Palestine via Turkey.

The Turkish authorities have today given assurances that Jewish refugee children will be transmitted through Turkey at the rate of 150 every ten days beginning next week.

STEINHARDT

NPL

**CONTROL COPY**

3 - War Refugee Bd  
(M. P. B.)

February 25, 1944

MEM  
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a War Refugee Agency. (10-00)

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

AMEMBASSY,

WARSAW  
\*146  
For the Ambassador and Hirschman

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

*cc: Special Representative of War Refugee Bd.*

Department's 68, January 25, concerning War Refugee Board and LEO of February 12, 8 p.m., concerning appointment Special Attache Hirschmann.

Special attention should be given to the following matter.

The War Refugee Board has resolved that one of the projects which should be pushed with greatest speed is an effort to facilitate the evacuation of as many refugees as possible from occupied areas to Turkey.

The Board feels that the most feasible way of accomplishing this extremely urgent task is to obtain from the Turkish Government effective measures to encourage the entry of more refugees. Concretely that government should be requested (a) To relax border and other controls and take such other action as will facilitate the entry of the largest possible number of refugees from Bulgaria, Rumania, and other areas adjacent to the Black Sea, and (b) To make an announcement in as nearly an official manner as possible indicating what is being done, and above all,

that  
DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

-2-, 1910, February 25, 7 1.2., to Ankara.

that entry of refugees into the country is permitted.

The Department desires to support the above program of the Board and you are requested at the earliest possible moment to approach the Turkish Government with a view to obtaining their agreement to the plan and immediate action on their part. In addition to making clear this Government's determination to do everything within its power to rescue refugees and its ~~expectation~~ <sup>hope for</sup> full cooperation from the Turkish Government you may, if you deem it advisable, indicate that (a) The War Refugee Board is prepared to take all possible measures, financial and otherwise, to aid the evacuation of refugees to Turkey; (b) The Board is prepared to render full assistance in the maintenance of refugees in Turkey; and (c) If the Turkish Government takes necessary steps to facilitate the entry of a substantial number of refugees the Board will make all efforts to move refugees from Turkey to other places if such action becomes desirable. You may wish to discuss specifically the possibility of setting up camps in Turkey in which refugees entering the country could live. The Board would, if necessary, make arrangements for financing the establishment and maintenance of these camps and the support

25-110, February 25, 1944, to Ankara.

support of the refugees in them. This plan may facilitate the removal, on a compulsory basis if necessary, of refugees from Turkey to other places if such action becomes desirable in order to permit the entry of more refugees into Turkey from occupied areas.

In connection with the foregoing, you are, of course, aware of the fact that the refugees remaining in Transnistria are in imminent danger of extermination by the retreating German armies, and that the evacuation of these refugees is a problem of the greatest urgency. Accordingly, you should do everything possible to aid in the development and execution of measures to effect the evacuation of these people to Turkey. Various private organizations are deeply interested in this problem and are anxious to assist in financing and otherwise carrying out the project. Representatives of at least some of such organizations in Turkey have been requested to get in touch at once with Mr. Hirschmann for the purpose of formulating a plan of action. You have previously indicated that the basic difficulty of evacuation is one of transportation. The private organizations interested in this project are making all efforts to secure ships and you

... 103, February 25, 7 p.m., to Ankara.

you should give them every assistance. In addition, you should advise us promptly of any measures which can be taken by the United States Government to see that necessary shipping, neutral or otherwise, is available. Above all, you should attempt to secure the full cooperation of the Turkish Government in this matter.

Efforts should, of course, also be made as soon as possible to increase the flow of refugees from Rumania to Turkey.

The Department appreciates that your own activities regarding this matter may be somewhat restricted by the terms of the Department's 103, February 7, 7 p.m., and that it may be necessary for you to arrange for Hirschmann to take the principal initiatives. You should use your best judgment in this regard. You will realize, however, that these negotiations are on an entirely different level than those relative to Turkey's role in the war; and that this Government is simply addressing a humanitarian appeal to the Turkish Government, as to other governments, rather than a request that they take certain action favorable to us at some sacrifice to them.

Please report to the Department the progress that is being

-5- , 110, February 22, 1944, to Ankara.

being made in this matter, indicating the practical measures that will be necessary to put the plan in operation, obstacles encountered, and such action as you think the Government of the United States should take to facilitate the operation.

STEPHENSON  
ACTING  
(GLX)

MRE:GLW:KG  
2/22/44

EH SPP U NEA NE

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, TURKEY

Refer to Cable No. 68, January 25, concerning War Refugee Board and  
No. of February , concerning appointment Special Attache Hirschmann.

Special attention should be given to the following matter.

The War Refugee Board has resolved that one of the projects which should be pushed with greatest speed is an effort to facilitate the evacuation of as many refugees as possible from occupied areas to Turkey.

The Board feels that the most feasible way of accomplishing this extremely urgent task is to obtain from the Turkish Government effective measures to encourage the entry of more refugees. Concretely that government should be requested (a) To relax border and other controls and take such other action as will facilitate the entry of the largest possible number of refugees from Bulgaria, Rumania, and other areas adjacent to the Black Sea, and (b) To make an announcement in as nearly an official manner as possible indicating what is being done, and above all, that entry of refugees into the country is permitted.

The Department is in full accord with the above program and you are instructed at the earliest possible moment to approach the Turkish Government with a view to obtaining their agreement to the plan. The request for immediate action on the part of the Turkish Government should be made in the strongest manner possible. In addition to making clear this Government's determination to do everything within its power to rescue refugees and its expectation of full cooperation from the Turkish Government you may, if you deem it advisable, indicate that (a) The War Refugee Board is prepared to take all possible measures, financial and otherwise, to aid the evacuation of refugees to Turkey; (b) The Board is prepared to render full assistance in the maintenance of refugees in Turkey; and (c) If the Turkish Government takes necessary steps to facilitate the entry of a substantial number of refugees the Board will make all efforts to move refugees from Turkey to other places if such action becomes desirable. You may wish to discuss specifically the possibility of setting up camps in Turkey in which refugees entering the country could live. The Board would, if necessary, make arrangements for financing the establishment and maintenance of these camps and the support of the refugees in them. This plan may facilitate the removal, on a compulsory basis if necessary, of refugees from Turkey to other places if such action becomes desirable in order to permit the entry of more refugees into Turkey from occupied areas.

In connection with the foregoing, you are, of course, aware of the fact that the refugees remaining in Transilvania are in imminent danger of extermination by the retreating German armies, and that the evacuation of

these refugees is a problem of the greatest urgency. Accordingly, you should do everything possible to aid in the development and execution of measures to effect the evacuation of these people to Turkey. Various private organizations are deeply interested in this problem and are anxious to assist in financing and otherwise carrying out the project. Representatives of at least some of such organizations in Turkey have been requested to get in touch at once with Mr. Hirschmann for the purpose of formulating a plan of action. You have previously indicated that the basic difficulty of evacuation is one of transportation. The private organizations interested in this project are making all efforts to secure ships and you should give them every assistance. In addition, you should advise us promptly of any measures which can be taken by the United States Government to see that necessary shipping, neutral or otherwise, is available. Above all, you should attempt to secure the full cooperation of the Turkish Government in this matter.

Efforts should, of course, also be made as soon as possible to increase the flow of refugees from Rumania to Turkey.

You should report to the Department the progress that is being made in this matter, indicating the practical measures that will be necessary to put the plan in operation, obstacles encountered, and such action as you think the Government of the United States should take to facilitate the operation.

2/14/44  
 W.S. J.P.

**CONTROL COPY**

*War Refugee Bd.  
M. Pelile*

TELEGRAM SENT

February 24, 1944

EME

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (93-93)

5 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND PRESS

ANKARA,

ANKARA

+145

TO STEINBERG AND HIRSCHMAN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

It is reported here in the papers that a high government official in Turkey told the Associated Press on February 15 that Turkey was willing to cooperate with the Palestine Commission and Allied diplomats in assisting Jewish refugees to leave the Balkans. We would appreciate immediate confirmation of this report. Please give us full information at once on the present position of the Turkish Government on this matter.

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

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

SECRETARIES  
Acting

WAR:ELM:KC  
2/18/44

JUR

EH

SMP

U

001010

FEB 18 1944

TO: Mr. Stettinius

FROM: Mr. Fehle

Attention: Mr. Warren

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

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

(Signed) J. W. Fehle

*per J. E. D.*

Enclosure.

JED:Bois:scr  
2/18/44

C A B L E

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT IN ANKARA.

TO STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMAN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

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

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

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

JEDuBois:acr  
2/18/44

February 23, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES:

In discussing other matters with Mr. McCloy and Mr. Bundy of the War Department today in Mr. McCloy's office, I told them of the developments in the shipping situation and of the fact that we had gotten an agreement from the War Shipping Administration to replace, if lost, the vessel to be used by the Turks in evacuating Jews from Constanza. McCloy and Bundy raised no objection to this action and agreed that the shipping situation should not present substantial difficulties in view of the increased amount of shipping now available.

Later the same day I called Stettinius and told him of the progress we had made getting War Shipping's and Lend Lease's approval to the replacement, if lost, of the Turkish ship proposed to be used in evacuations from Rumania, and cleared with him my taking up with the Swedish Minister the possible use of Swedish ships for evacuation purposes.

  
V. W. Pehle

February 23, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES:

In discussing other matters with Mr. McGloy and Mr. Bundy of the War Department today in Mr. McGloy's office, I told them of the developments in the shipping situation and of the fact that we had gotten an agreement from the War Shipping Administration to replace, if lost, the vessel to be used by the Turks in evacuating Jews from Constanza. McGloy and Bundy raised no objection to this action and agreed that the shipping situation should not present substantial difficulties in view of the increased amount of shipping now available.

Later the same day I called Stettinius and told him of the progress we had made getting War Shipping's and Lend Lease's approval to the replacement, if lost, of the Turkish ship proposed to be used in evacuations from Rumania, and cleared with him my taking up with the Swedish Minister the possible use of Swedish ships for evacuation purposes.

(Initialed) J. W. P.  
J. W. Pehle

JWPehle:lhk 2/23/44

February 22, 1944.

MEMORANDUM

Names of Persons in Istanbul Who Evacuate  
Balkan Refugees -- Censorship Intercept  
(NI - FIN 9222). (Material obtained from  
file in Visa Division, State Department)

On November 9, 1943, H. Japotinsky wrote a letter to J. Mirelman, 1750 Calle Heredia, Buenos Aires, Argentina, stating that the writer had learned that addressee's demand for a visa had been refused. The writer states that "we" are consulting Aksin\* on what still can be done about it. Addressee's presence in Washington needed to coordinate efforts in the cause of Jews in Europe.

Arieh Ben Eliezer has reached Palestine and has contacted Klarman, who has been in Istanbul during the past two months. They both believe that the resumption of "our" activities in evacuating people from Europe (mainly Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary) is now possible. "We" gave Ben Eliezer \$4,000 for the purpose. Klarman is going to Ankara to secure political backing for Klarman. Klarman has with him a group of active people, including Schieber (writer thinks Damm knows him). The whole matter is serious and stands a good chance of success.

\*This may be Benjamin Aksin, who works in the Library of Congress and who is known to Friedman and Hartwig.

Official File Copy

February 21, 1944

To: Mr. Bundy  
From: J. W. Pehle

In accordance with our conversation of this morning, there is attached hereto a copy of a cable to Steinhardt in Ankara. This cable has been cleared by us and by the State Department. Please call me on this as soon as possible.

J. W. Pehle

JWP:mgt 2/21/44

*JWP*

AMERICAN EMBASSY,

ANKARA

For the Ambassador and Hirschmann

Department's 68, January 25, concerning War Refugee Board and 120 of February 12, 8 p.m., concerning appointment Special Attache Hirschmann.

Special attention should be given to the following matter.

The War Refugee Board has resolved that one of the projects which should be pushed with greatest speed is an effort to facilitate the evacuation of as many refugees as possible from occupied areas to Turkey.

The Board feels that the most feasible way of accomplishing this extremely urgent task is to obtain from the Turkish Government effective measures to encourage the entry of more refugees. Concretely that government should be requested (a) To relax border and other controls and take such other action as will facilitate the entry of the largest possible number of refugees from Bulgaria, Rumania, and other areas adjacent to the Black Sea, and (b) To make an announcement in as nearly an official manner as possible indicating what is being done, and above all, that entry of refugees into the country is permitted.

The Department desires to support the above program of the Board and you are requested at the earliest possible

moment

moment to approach the Turkish Government with a view to obtaining their agreement to the plan and immediate action on their part. In addition to making clear this Government's determination to do everything within its power to rescue refugees and its expectation of full cooperation from the Turkish Government you may, if you deem it advisable, indicate that (a) The War Refugee Board is prepared to take all possible measures, financial and otherwise, to aid the evacuation of refugees to Turkey; (b) The Board is prepared to render full assistance in the maintenance of refugees in Turkey; and (c) If the Turkish Government takes necessary steps to facilitate the entry of a substantial number of refugees the Board will make all efforts to move refugees from Turkey to other places if such action becomes desirable. You may wish to discuss specifically the possibility of setting up camps in Turkey in which refugees entering the country could live. The Board would, if necessary, make arrangements for financing the establishment and maintenance of these camps and the support of the refugees in them. This plan may facilitate the removal, on a compulsory basis if necessary, of refugees from Turkey to other places if such action becomes desirable in order to permit the entry of more refugees into Turkey from occupied areas.

In connection

001021

In connection with the foregoing, you are, of course, aware of the fact that the refugees remaining in Transnistria are in imminent danger of extermination by the retreating German armies, and that the evacuation of these refugees is a problem of the greatest urgency. Accordingly, you should do everything possible to aid in the development and execution of measures to effect the evacuation of these people to Turkey. Various private organizations are deeply interested in this problem and are anxious to assist in financing and otherwise carrying out the project. Representatives of at least some of such organizations in Turkey have been requested to get in touch at once with Mr. Hirschmann for the purpose of formulating a plan of action. You have previously indicated that the basic difficulty of evacuation is one of transportation. The private organizations interested in this project are making all efforts to secure ships and you should give them every assistance. In addition, you should advise us promptly of any measures which can be taken by the United States Government to see that necessary shipping, neutral or otherwise, is available. Above all, you should attempt to secure the full cooperation of the Turkish Government in this matter.

Efforts

001022



**CONTROL COPY**

Stockholm

Dated February 19, 1944

Rec'd 8:10 p.m.

MES-133

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

Secretary of State

Washington

X  
571. February 19, 8 p.m.

FOR THE REFUGEE BOARD

Swedish firm AGA Baltic states its agent in Rumania Stephen Holczer whose address is Timisoara and is of Jewish birth is unable to leave Rumania with his wife and two children in spite of Swedish Legation's success in obtaining Rumanian permission and obtaining also Turkish transit visa because they unable to obtain permission for entry Palestine or Cyprus

JOHNSON

HTM

*File  
87*

001024

# CONTROL COPY

RA-877  
This telegram must be  
paraphrased before being  
communicated to anyone  
other than a Governmental  
agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated February 18, 1944

Rec'd 2:24 a.m., 19th

Secretary of State

Washington

282, February 18, 11 a.m.

FOR JOHN PEHELE DIRECTOR OF WAR REFUGEE BOARD  
FROM HIRSCHMANN.

I am gradually getting a picture of some of the possibilities and of the enormous difficulties facing our work. Although the Turks express themselves as sympathetic thus far they have been helpful only to a limited extent. They may be due to some of the circumstances recited below. In dealing with the Turks I shall rely entirely on Ambassador Steinhardt who enjoys their full confidence.

Bulgaria through which almost all refugees from Europe and the Balkans must pass in transit to Turkey or beyond has for quite some time past been withholding transit visas for those coming from other



001020

-2- 262, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

from other parts of Europe and the Balkans and withholds exit visas from Jews residing in Bulgaria. In the past fortnight only one Jewish family succeeded in leaving Bulgaria and reaching Istanbul.

While I hoped that we would not have to avail ourselves immediately of the special authority to deal with the enemy I feel that you in Washington and we here will be compelled to use this means.

The satellite countries namely Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria are most anxious to whitewash themselves in the eyes of the Allies. We must exploit this anxiety at once. We must bring every pressure brought to bear through neutral agencies or any other means at your disposal, as well as by direct contact with the representative of the above mentioned satellites. They must be given to understand in no uncertain terms that unless they take immediate steps which will facilitate our work the Allies will look upon them as real enemies who are fully collaborating with the Nazis in their work of extermination and that this will be held against them when the war is over.

-3- 282, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

is over. It should be made clear to them that no apologies or extenuations will be accepted. I expect to telegraph you more fully about the Bulgarian bottle in a few days.

I think it would be helpful if you would call on the Turkish Ambassador in Washington to request of him that he cable his government the determination of the United States Government to carry out its rescue program with all energy and resources and that immediate aid on the part of the Turkish Government will be highly evaluated.

I am informed that in view of the Bulgarian impasse the Jewish agency officially dealing with transportation of Jewish refugees from the Balkans has extreme difficulties with land route bottlenecked in Bulgaria. They obtained promise of provisional charter for SS VATAN, 3700 tons owned by Kalkawan Riza, Turkish shipowner who is willing to take her with Turkish to Constanza to bring out to Istanbul 800 to 1000 refugees, mainly children from Transnistria whom Rumanians are at present willing to release, but who may at any moment be in danger of starvation

-4- 282, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

of starvation and death. International Red Cross promises to procure safe conduct for this ship from all belligerent powers concerned. The Turkish Government fully controls all private shipping and is faced with extreme transport difficulties of its own. It refuses to permit owner to enter into Charter Agreement because of danger of loss of ship even when under safe conduct as has occurred.

To overcome anxiety as to possible loss of ship, we strongly urge immediate offer of guarantee by the United States to the Turkish Government to replace ship. Will you cable us authority to offer this specific guarantee of ship replacement immediately from nearest waters which please designate in your reply in order to reopen negotiations on this question of Turkish ship. Have reasons to believe that this guarantee would offer basis for reopening question. As an alternative there are Swedish ships carrying food from Canada to Greece under the auspices of Swedish Red Cross. The exact number is unknown here. Complete information on this is available only at Stockholm which I suggest you procure

-5- 282, February 18, 11 a.m. from Ankara

you procure at once. These empty Swedish ships could possibly proceed from Greece to Constanza and transport some refugees. Turkish officials suggest this alternative plan. We prefer first plan as it would save time in a situation which can disintegrate quickly. Also once this ship is allowed the first voyage and accomplishes voyage successfully we can work to continue these trips to save additional refugees.

Please also explore at once the possible use of other neutral ships from Portugal or Spain. The point is that we must under all circumstances get a ship at once.

Please advise.

STEINHARDT

EDA

CONTROL COPY

File 24

BE-220

Ankara

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

Dated February 18, 1944

Rec'd 1:42 a.m., 20th

Secretary of State

Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF  
FEB 21 1944  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

286, February 18, 8 p.m.

FOR LEAVITT OF AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE FROM IRA HIRSCHMANN.

Referring to your cable of February 18 regarding boat to evacuate Jewish refugees from Constanza, I have been working with Barlas on this situation. Ambassador Steinhardt and I have sent detailed message to John Pehele War Refugee Board with recommendations for action on this and other related matters.

STEINHARDT

EEG

**CONTROL COPY**

Official File Copy

TELEGRAM SENT

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

February 16, 1944

7 p.m.

AMERICAN EMBASSY,

ANKARA.

124

FOR IRA A. HIRSCHMAN FROM LEAVITT OF AMERICAN

JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE.]

NOTE Please consult Barlas, Istanbul, regarding  
possibility utilizing his boat for evacuation Jews  
from Constanta. Barlas requested Nyassa proceed  
Constanta but difficulties securing navicerts almost  
insuperable. Please cable also what shipping facilities  
available, possibilities of evacuation, and any need of  
additional funds. War Refugee Board very interested  
this matter. UNQUOTE.

STETTINIUS  
(Acting)

VD:GF 2/10/44

NEA

FEB 10 1944

TO: Mr. Travers  
FROM: J. W. Pehle

It will be appreciated if you will have dispatched the following cable to Ira Hirschmann, c/o American Embassy, Ankara, Turkey, from Mr. Leavitt of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and bill the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc., 270 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y., for the cost of this message and any answers thereto:

"Please consult Barlas, Istanbul, regarding possibility utilizing his boat for evacuation Jews from Constanta. Barlas requested Nyassa proceed Constanta but difficulties securing navicerts almost insuperable. Please cable also what shipping facilities available, possibilities of evacuation, and any need of additional funds. War Refugee Board very interested this matter. Leavitt."

JWA  
FHode:hd 2/10/44

# 124  
2/14/44

CABLE TO HIRSCHMANN, C/O AMERICAN EMBASSY, ANKARA, TURKEY

Please consult Barlas, Istanbul, regarding possibility utilizing his boat for evacuation Jews from Constanta. Barlas requested Nyessa proceed Constanta but difficulties securing navicerts almost insuperable. Please cable also what shipping facilities available, possibilities of evacuation, and any need of additional funds. War Refugee Board very interested this matter.

LEAVITT

*McKean*

C O P Y

BRITISH EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
FEBRUARY 8, 1944

REF. 105/ 5/44

Dear Mr. Pehle,

With reference to our conversation of February 17th, I enclose for your confidential information a copy of a letter from Sir R. Campbell to Mr. Hull, dated September 9th, 1943, about the position of refugees who escape from Nazi Europe into Turkey and other neutral countries.

The Foreign Office are anxious that in the interest of the refugees themselves this decision should be kept secret, and we were only authorised to disclose it in strictest confidence to Mr. Hull and Mr. Myrton Taylor. The United States Ambassador at Ankara has also been informed of the position.

In view of London's emphasis on secrecy I am sure you will realize the importance of treating this information as strictly confidential.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) W.G. Hayter

W.G. Hayter

Mr. John Pehle,  
United States Treasury  
Washington, D.C.

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of British

Govt. telegram, 1/12/72

By RHP Date

SEP 18 1972

100-103-217  
Des. Mr. Bayre

COPY

LETTER FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT

SEPTEMBER 9, 1943.

My dear Hull,

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

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

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

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

I am writing a similar letter to Mr. Myron Taylor.

Yours sincerely,

R.I. Campbell

(This copy made  
from the "bible")

Copy to  
Mr. Tolson  
(1)

MEMORANDUM

January 25, 1944.

Evacuation of Refugees to Turkey

Turkey apparently offers an opportunity for concrete action designed to rescue Jews from the occupied areas and to give relief to those who possibly cannot be evacuated.

1. It is understood that at present Turkey is permitting the entry of a very limited number of refugees from Bulgaria. The important fact is that the door is now open, however small the crack, and an effort should be made to take full advantage of the situation for the evacuation of refugees from Rumania through Bulgaria to Turkey. This must be done as quickly as possible since, as the President has indicated, this road will be completely blocked in the event that Turkey enters the war.
2. Turkey is probably the only place to which it is practicable to effect an evacuation of refugees from Transnistria and other areas adjacent to the Black Sea.
3. Turkey is possibly a base for obtaining news food and other relief supplies to be distributed to refugees in occupied areas.

An effort to accomplish the foregoing objectives would include -

- (a) A clear and forceful expression to the Turkish Government of the fact that the U.S. Government is intent upon rescuing as many refugees as possible and requests the full cooperation of the Turkish Government.
- (b) Most specifically, the Turkish Government should be requested to extend as widely as possible the now limited facilities for entry from Bulgaria.
- (c) Every effort should be made to elicit the full support of that Government for an evacuation from Transnistria.
- (d) Also of importance would be an effort to establish at least temporary camps in Turkey for the care of evacuees.

- (e) The cooperation of the Turkish Government should, of course, be solicited in an effort to procure food and other supplies for relief of refugees in occupied areas.

The thing of utmost importance is for this Government to insist, as far as possible, that the Turkish Government lend full support to all such efforts.

Mr. Ira Hirschman, a vice-president of Bloomingdale Brothers and Company, Inc., and a member of the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, is presently on his way to Turkey. He is going, apparently not as a representative of any private organization, but as a private citizen deeply concerned with the problem who feels that something can be done now to deal with it. In view of Mr. Hirschman's experience and his apparent zeal it may well be that he can be of great help to the War Refugee Board in this situation. It may be noted that, according to Hirschman, he is going to Turkey with the approval if not at the invitation of Ambassador Stokhardt.

JSW:bbk - 1/25/44

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EVACUATION AND RELIEF OF REFUGEES THROUGH TURKEY.

Turkey apparently offers an opportunity for concrete action designed to rescue Jews from the occupied areas and to give relief to those who possibly cannot be evacuated.

1. It is understood that at present Turkey is permitting the entry of a very limited number of refugees from Bulgaria. The important fact is that the door is now open, however small the crack, and an effort should be made to take full advantage of the situation for the evacuation of refugees from Rumania through Bulgaria to Turkey. This must be done as quickly as possible since, as the President has indicated, this road will be completely blocked in the event that Turkey enters the war.
2. Turkey is the nearest place of safety to which it is practicable to effect an evacuation of refugees from Transnistria and other areas adjacent to the Black Sea.
3. Turkey is possibly a base for obtaining some food and other relief supplies to be distributed to refugees in occupied areas.

Action designed to accomplish the foregoing objectives would include efforts to get the Turkish Government:

- (a) To extend as widely as possible the now limited facilities for entry from Bulgaria.
- (b) To cooperate fully in the execution of a plan for an evacuation ~~from~~ Transnistria.
- (c) To assist in the establishment of at least temporary camps in Turkey for the care of evacuees.
- (d) To aid efforts to procure food and other supplies for relief of refugees in occupied areas.

Mr. Ira Hirschmann, a vice-president of Bloomingdale Brothers and Company, Inc., and a member of the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, is presently on his way to Turkey. He is going, apparently not as a representative of any private organization, but as a private citizen deeply concerned with the problem who feels that something can be done now to deal with it. In view of Mr. Hirschmann's experience and his apparent zeal it may well be that he can be of great help to the War Refugee Board in this situation. It may be noted that, according to Hirschmann, he is going to Turkey with the approval if not at the invitation of Ambassador Steinhardt.

JBFriedmann:ecr  
1/25/44