

with respect to Relief and
of Refugees: Evacuations to and
from Turkey

Evacuation to and Through Turkey, Vol. 5-B, Folder 1

2. B SHIPS FOR EVACUATION

Milka, Maritza, Bellacita	d
Bessarabia, Transylvania	e
Small Boats without safe conduct	f
Salanatin	g

WAR REFUGEE BOARD RECORDS

d.

7 0 0 3 3

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

Wm. R. ...
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

GEM-78
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement.
W)

Ankara
Dated July 5, 1944
Rec'd 5:56 p.m., 6th.

CONTROL COPY

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

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1218 X
~~2020~~, July 5, 3 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 8 1944
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD FROM ANKARA
Ankara No. 87.

Reference is made to your 64, June 29. Preliminary investigations here have disclosed the following information with regard to the cessation of movement of refugees from Constanza to Istanbul in May and June.

The sinking of the *MARITZA* occasioned the withdrawal on the part of the Bulgarian authorities of permission to release ships for refugee purposes. The Bulgarians fear the loss of additional small ships and the Germans alleged that they required the tonnage for military purposes. Steps were taken thereafter to secure small Turkish ships engaged in transporting merchandise from Istanbul to Varna, Bulgaria, under agreement between the Turkish and German Governments, since the Turkish Government does not wish to use the big ships in foreign waters. The Jewish agency informs us that it has

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

d

-2-#2018, July 5, 3 p.m., from Ankara.

arranged for four Turkish and one Greek ship to transport refugees on their return voyages from Constanza to Istanbul. The ships now ready for sailing at Constanza and the approximate number of passengers they can transport are: SS KAZBEK 450, MAFKURA 150, BILBIL 350, MARINA 350, and the Greeks SS MYRNA 1200 passengers. There is reason to hope that should the above mentioned five ships, the first of whose departure is expected daily, successfully conclude their voyages, they will be followed by these or other ships of similar type and under similar circumstances. Katzki and I are working with representatives of the Jewish agency and the Joint Distribution Committee to break the deadlock which is delaying the departure of these ships. Upon their arrival at the port of Istanbul we have the assurance of Ambassador Steinhardt that as a result of his personal agreement with Cevadacikalin, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there will be no difficulty in permitting the ships to disembark in Istanbul their passengers without proper papers and in arranging for their transportation through Turkey to Palestine.

Another factor leading to the delay of the above-mentioned ship movement is the reorganization of the Rumanian Government control of its operations connected

with this

033

-3-#2018, July 5, 3 p.m., from Ankara.

with this so-called illegal transportation. We are informed that the Rumanian Government has established an inter-ministerial committee for immigration which includes representatives of several government departments as well as one Jewish representative, Zissu who is reported to be a close friend of Micael Antonescu and a rich man. People leaving Rumania must be in possession of exit permits and the formation of this new committee interrupted arrangements which had been made for securing such permits. An interim period was evidently necessary to arrange for these new connections. The Rumanians are reported to have decided to permit children and adults over 45 to leave the country and it is reported that the Germans have accepted their plan. Many of these refugees have come to Rumania illegally from Poland and some are now arriving from Hungary.

An appreciable number of the 2600 refugees above-mentioned will be children who were released from Transnistria as a result of the efforts of the War Refugee Board in March 1944.

The information contained in your 64 has been conveyed to Schwartz in Ankara. Ambassador Steinhardt and I recommend that the program outlined in your 64 be undertaken with

-4-#2018, July 5, 3 p.m., from Ankara.

undertaken with concurrent participation in the responsibility by the WRB since from our explorations to date the type of proposals mentioned therein seems to be only immediate means for rescuing appreciable numbers of refugees from the Balkans.

The above will be elaborated upon fully in a report which will be sent to you in due course.

KELLEY

EDA
RR

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

BE-718
Distribution of true
reading by special
arrangement. (S) (W)

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

Dated June 14, 1944

Rec'd 1:16 p.m. 15th

██████████
For security reasons the
text of this telegram must
be closely guarded.
Secretary of State
Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
CONTROL COPY

JUN 17 1944

1066; June 14, 8 p.m.
FOR THE WRB FROM THE AMBASSADOR

Ankara No. 76.

As it now appears extremely doubtful that either a German or Bulgarian safe conduct will be granted for the SS TARI, as the SS MARITZA has been sunk and the SS MILKA detained for an indefinite period of time by the German authorities at Burgas, and as no Turk vessel irrespective of its tonnage may carry refugees without permission of the Turk Government in each case, I have deemed it essential to have a talk with the Secretary General of the Foreign Office with a view to inducing the Turk authorities to authorize the use of a number of Turk vessels to transport refugees from Balkan ports to Istanbul.

The Secretary General expressed his regret at the situation which has developed with respect to the TARI, MARTIZA and MILKA and said that notwithstanding various Turk laws and regulations resulting from the war

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

-2- #1066, June 14, 8 p.m. from Ankara

the war which stood in the way of an immediate acquiescence he believed it would be possible to find some means of meeting my request. He said he would look into the matter at once with the purpose of ascertaining what Turk vessels were available either in Balkan ports or Istanbul and which the Turk Government might be able to make available for the desired purpose.

Acikalın raised the question of responsibility in case one of these ships were to be sunk while operating without safe conduct with a considerable number of refugees on board observing that it would be most unfortunate were the Turk Government to be criticized for having endeavored to assist in a Humanitarian act. I replied that the position of Jewish refugees in the Balkans was now so desperate that it was reasonably certain they would prefer to run the risk of attempting a passage without safe conduct rather than to be left to the tender mercies of the Nazis. Acikalın then said that under these circumstances he would endeavor to make some Turk vessels available for this purpose.

STEINHARDT

WSB BB

The New York Times.
LATE CITY EDITION
MAY 31 1944

Refugee Ship Sinks in Black Sea
ISTANBUL, Turkey, May 30
(Reuter)—The 250-ton Bulgarian
motor vessel Maritza, which has
been used for transporting Jewish
refugees from Rumania to Turkey,
sank in a gale in the Black Sea
while returning to Constanta from
Istanbul. As she was on her re-
turn journey, no refugees were
aboard. Her crew of seven were
saved.

NEW YORK DAILY PM—May 31, 1944

**Refugee Ship's Sinking
May Strand Hundreds**

Istanbul dispatches report the sinking in a Black Sea gale of the 250-ton Bulgarian motorship Maritza, which had been used to transport Jewish refugees from Romania to Turkey. The Maritza was on its way back to Constanza, Romania, so no refugees were aboard.

Its loss, however, may strand hundreds of Jews in Romania. The Maritza carried 200 or 300 each trip away from Hitler Europe to Turkey, from where they were sent to Palestine.

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dw

War Ref Bd
copying
File
B7

RECEIVED
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 31, 1944
SUBJECT: 886

NO 11 NA

CONTROL COPY

Following is Ankara's No. 66 from the Ambassador for the War Refugee Board.

Today I received an unconfirmed report that the Bulgarian SS BARITZA foundered at sea while en route to Constanza on her return from Istanbul after she had disembarked on May 18, 316 Jewish refugees.

In view of the recognized unseaworthiness of the BARITZA (refer to my message of March 25, No. 527) we must regard it as an act of providence that the ship did not sink while carrying refugees en route to Istanbul.

STEINBAUM

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-74
By R. H. Parks Date **SEP 18 1972**

1034

Low Ref. Bd. 1.

M. P. Kelly

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 19, 1944
NUMBER: 207
909

1 copy only

CONTROL COPY

Following is Ankara's No. 60, from the Ambassador for the War
Refugee Board.

Reference is made herewith to my message dated May 2, No. 786.

On May 17 the Bulgarian ship SS MARITZA from Constanza with 316

Jewish refugees on board appeared off the port of Istanbul and
permission to enter was requested. Despite the fact that the MARITZA
again arrived without proper papers and that the refugees on board were
without Turkish entry or transit visas and without Palestine entry
certificates, it has been directed by the Minister of Foreign
Affairs that the refugees be permitted to land, and the Minister of
Communications has been requested to provide immediate transportation
to Palestine for them. The British authorities in Istanbul last night
issued the requisite Palestine entry certificates.

RECEIVED
MAY 20 1944
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

RECEIVED
MAY 20 1944
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

STEINHARDT

DOR:VAG:HL 5/22/44

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

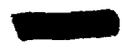
1034

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*was by Ed
and Pille*

CORRECTION ON
PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 19, 1944
NUMBER: 907



The number of this telegram was erroneously marked
207. The correct number is 907.

82 01 MA 03 YAM 1944
WASHINGTON, D. C.
NAVY DEPT. BOARD
RECEIVED

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

034

Woe + + + + +
2d

MAY 10 1944

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Dr. Schwartz was received from the American Legation, Lisbon, under date of May 6, 1944:

"On the fifth of May the Steamer MILCA arrived from Constanza with 250 passengers aboard. The French relief budget has been satisfactorily arranged by Saly Mayer for the month of May."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

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

JH:lab 5/10/44

*war of Bd
m. P. K. L.*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

1 copy only

FROM: American Legation, Lisbon
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 6, 1944
NUMBER: 1368

CONTROL COPY

files

ATTENTION OF LEAVITT FROM SCHWARTZ.

WRB 22.

On the fifth of May the Steamer MILCA arrived from Constanza with 250 passengers aboard. The French relief budget has been satisfactorily arranged by Saly Mayer for the month of May.

NORWEG

RECEIVED
MAY 10 1944
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE

RECEIVED
MAY 10 1944
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE

*7/10/44
W. H. P. K. L.
Schwartz
H.*

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

034

Secretary Morgenthau

MAY 3 1944

Mr. Pehle

We have just been advised that the "S.S. Milka" arrived again in Istanbul on April 30th carrying 272 refugees from Constanza. This is the second voyage for the "S.S. Milka," which carried 239 refugees on its first trip early in April. The "Milka" is one of three small vessels which have recently been put in use for Black Sea evacuations. The "S.S. Maritza" arrived in Istanbul on April 10th with 244 refugees and the "S.S. Bellacitta" arrived in Istanbul on April 24th with 152 refugees.

During the month of April a total of 907 refugees were evacuated from Constanza to Turkey on these three small boats. All of the rescued people have been permitted transit through Turkey to Palestine.

We are still awaiting German safe-conduct for the "S.S. Tari" which we are advised will accommodate 1500 refugees.

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

207
FH:lab 5/2/44

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMEMBASSY, ANKARA ✓
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 2, 1944
NUMBER: 788

CONTROL COPY

Following is Ankara's 49 from the Ambassador for War Refugee Board.

Yesterday the vessel SS MILKA from Constansa carrying 272 Jewish refugees appeared off the Port of Istanbul and asked for permission to enter the port.

The Foreign Minister has directed the refugees to land and has requested the Communications Minister to provide transportation to the Syrian frontier for them in spite of the fact that the vessel again arrived without proper papers and the refugees on board are without Turk entry or transit visas and without Palestine entry certificates. The British in Istanbul are today issuing the requisite Palestine entry certificates.

It is necessary for me to advise the Board to refrain from expressing publicly at this time our appreciation of the Foreign Minister's action in allowing the continued transit to Palestine of Jew refugees arriving in Turkey illegally. It is feared that such public expression at this time might embarrass Turk relations with Arab countries and might be used against the Foreign Minister by his political opponents who are not very active. Therefore it is recommended that any public expressions of appreciation be deferred until later especially since I am

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

advised that the Bulgarian vessel SS MARITZA, which will present a situation similar to the MILKA, is due to arrive in Istanbul shortly.

STEINHARDT

RECEIVED
MILKING BOARD
A. B. REEGLE BOARD

SO 11 11 05

1035

KCB-862

PLAIN
Lisbon
Dated May 1, 1944
Rec'd 6:23 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
1316, May 1, 6 p.m.
WEB 13

FOLLOWING FROM JOSEPH SCHWARTZ FOR LEAVITT JOINT
DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE NEW YORK,

Following report received from Shanghai first
four months 1944 through local community:

All figures below mentioned are local dollars
and in thousands. Our credit balance first January
1944 received during January February March 1944
various local loans and Swiss donation total 22394
receipts in April almost nil total receipts 28662
Expenditures for feeding, 15487; housing, 3911; medical
992; cash instead of food 2039; monetary assistance
loans 143; various donations, 240; administration
expenses, 96, total, expenditure until 31st March
approximately 23000. Since April first till today
spent entire cash balance approximately 3652. Are
without funds and without possibility of paying over-
due bills and without money for May expenditures
estimated 140,00 Swiss francs. At present impossible
borrowing locally urgent help required telegraph
immediately in case no assistance forthcoming
immediately will be forced to stop next week hot
meals and reduce bread distribution. Mailing
monthly statements with fullest particulars.

Local community will make special one time grant
\$5,000 to meet emergency. SS MILCA arrived Istanbul
from Constanza yesterday carrying 272 refugees who
leaving by train today for Palestine. This is
fourth boatload to arrive.

NORWEB

EJH
WTD

cc: Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y.), Abrahamson, DuBois, Friedman,
Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Cohn, Stewart, Central Files,
Cable Control Files.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

CONTROL COPY

4-W ~ Ref Bd
(M. Behl)

NCB-336
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Governmental
agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated April 25, 1944.

Rec'd 2:19 p.m., 26th

File
JB7

Secretary of State,

Washington.

746, April 25, 11 p.m.

FOR WRB FROM THE AMBASSADOR ANKARA, No. 46.

The Bulgarian SS BELLACITTA arrived in Istanbul
yesterday afternoon with 152 Jewish refugees on board.
As stated in my telegram 713, April 19, I do not
anticipate any difficulty in arranging for the prompt
transit of these refugees to Palestine.

STEENHARDT

CONTROL COPY

7- War Refugee Bd
(Mr Beble)

File

2d

NCB-562
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Governmental
agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated April 23, 1944.

Rec'd 7:50 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
APR 25 1944

733, April 23, 4:00 p.m. COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS
ANKARA NUMBER 44 FOR THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD

FROM THE AMBASSADOR.

Department's number 351, April 19.

I very much appreciate the Board's generous
telegram and shall of course continue my efforts to
facilitate the disembarkation and transit through
Turkey of refugees irrespective of whether their
arrival in Turkish ports is legal or illegal.

STEINHARDT

EJH

28

APR 20 1944

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Dr. Joseph Schwartz was received through the American Legation, Lisbon, under date of April 14, 1944:

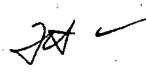
"Carrying 243 passengers the ship MILCA has arrived in Istanbul from Constanza. It is expected that the International Red Cross ship BELLACITA will arrive with (?) children and 15 adults aboard and the steamer MARITZA arrived on April 10 with 244 refugees. In groups of about fifty and at regular intervals Turkish repatriates coming from France are arriving. We are meeting entirely the costs of their care."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

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

FH:lab 4/20/44 

TELEGRAM SENT

2 - War Refugee
April 19, 1944

9 p.m. *Ed*
(Mr. Baker)

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

CONTROL COPY

AMEMBASSY,

ANKARA.

351
FOR THE ANBASSADOR FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD. *pls*

WRB no. 27.

Hirschmann has informed us in detail of the enormous difficulties you overcame in personally arranging with the Turkish authorities to allow the refugees from the SS MILKA and the SS MARITZA to land in Istanbul and to be supplied immediately with railroad transportation through Turkey to Palestine.

Hirschmann also informs us that there will in all probability be other boats approaching Istanbul, which are in the same category, and that these also would not be authorized to disembark their passengers in Turkey without your personal intervention.

Highest commendation is due you for the resourceful application of the goodwill you had built up with the Turkish officials in dealing successfully with this work of mercy in these crucial months.

HULL
(GEN)

WRB:GLN:KO
4/19/44

ME

1035

PROPOSED CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT,
ANKARA, FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Hirschmann has informed us in detail of the enormous difficulties you overcame in personally arranging with the Turkish authorities to allow the refugees from the SS MILKA and the SS MARITZA to land in Istanbul and to be supplied immediately with railroad transportation through Turkey to Palestine.

Hirschmann also informs us that there will in all probability be other boats approaching Istanbul, which are in the same category, and that these also would not be authorized to disembark their passengers in Turkey without your personal intervention.

Highest commendation is due you for the resourceful application of the goodwill you had built up with the Turkish officials in dealing successfully with this work of mercy in these crucial months.

This is War Refugee Board Cable to Ankara No. 27

IHirschmann:rc

4/18/44

1035

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 19, 1944
NUMBER: 713 (Section 1)

CONTROL COPY

As Ankara's number 40 the following message is from the Ambassador for the War Refugee Board and it refers to number 337 dated April 18 from the Department.

Between the voyages of the SS MARITZA and the SS MILKA on the one hand and that of the SS BELLACITA on the other, there is a fundamental difference. The MARITZA and the MILKA sailed without either the proper papers or the authority to enter a port of Turkey and practically all of the refugees on board were without Palestine entry certificates and were also without Turkish entrance or transit visas. Illegal is the ~~xxx~~ word used here in referring to voyages of this character. The BELLACITA on the other hand has the proper papers, permission to enter the port of Istanbul and it is said that all of the refugees on board have Palestine entry certificates as well as Turkish transit visas. Legal is the word used here in referring to voyages of this character.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/21/44

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

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 19, 1944
NUMBER: 713 (Section 2)

Up to the present time the BELLACITA has not arrived but no difficulty in transiting the refugees on board to Palestine is expected by me. With reference to further illegal voyages by the MARITZA and the MILKA I feel reasonably well satisfied that if the number does not go beyond five hundred a month, I can persuade the Minister for Foreign Affairs to allow the entry and transit of refugees carried on such illegal voyages as each occasion may present itself. Doubtless the carrying capacity of the railroad to the Syrian frontier from Istanbul will in each instance affect his decision. With reference to the substantial increase in the transit to Palestine from Istanbul arriving here legally which has taken place during the past two or three months and being thoroughly familiar with the additional load which the transportation system will support, my best judgment is that approximately an additional five hundred refugees arriving each month illegally would be the maximum for whom rail transportation could be provided by the Foreign Minister.

STEINHARDT

DOR:MPL
4/21/44

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

copy of [unclear]
[unclear]

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Ankara
DATED: April 15, 1944
NUMBER: 337
X

Copy [unclear]

CONTROL COPY

FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, ANKARA,
TURKEY.

[unclear]

This is WRE Cable to Ankara No. 22.

Reference your Nos. 625 and 626 of April 8.

Schwartz being advised of your recommendation regarding
Portuguese boat with which we concur.

Your efforts in arranging transit for refugees arriving
on SS MARITZA are greatly appreciated. In view of recent
voyages of MILKA, MARITZA AND BELLACITTA Board would be inter-
ested to know if there is possibility that such boats can
continue evacuation operations.

APR 15 11 08 AM '44

WASHINGTON D.C.
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
RECEIVED

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

036

Refugee, post
SOMASIST, ps
Reference to
EPH to MEG C
LONKRA

FROM AVB BELGEE
NUMBER: X
DATED: 32A
TO: YELIT Jp.
BY: AMERICAN EM
SECRETARIA OF
ORIGINAL TEXT

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, ANKARA, TURKEY FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

This is WRB Cable to Ankara No. 22.

Reference your Nos. 625 and 626 of April 8.

Schwartz being advised of your recommendation regarding Portuguese boat with which we concur.

Your efforts in arranging transit for refugees arriving on SS MARITZA are greatly appreciated. In view of recent voyages of MILKA, MARITZA and BELLACITTA Board would be interested to know if there is possibility that such boats can continue evacuation operations.

April 13, 1944
12:00 p.m.

JBFBbk - 4/13/44
MSM

0 3 15

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE April 12, 1944

TO Mr. Friedman
FROM J. W. Pehle

Why shouldn't we send a cable to Steinhardt immediately asking why the three Bulgarian ships which recently came to Turkey cannot repeat the voyage? Apparently Bulgarian ships do not necessarily need a German safe conduct in order to traverse the Black Sea. In any event the decision can be made in Turkey and we ought to suggest further voyages for these ships.

Already done
JST

JWP

file
JWP

CONTROL COPY

DMH
LL-780
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated April 13, 1944

Rec'd 3:20 p.m., 14th.

Secretary of State,

657, April 13, 4 p.m.

FOR WRB FROM THE AMBASSADOR.

Department's 298, April 5.

Ankara 35.

The refugees referred to in my 564 of March 29 as
having arrived on the SS MILKA are the same as those
referred to in the press report of April 1.

STEINHARDT

MRM

1036

CONTROL COPY

2 - War Ref Bd
(Mr. Gelle)
7. di
157

CORRECTED COPY

KEM-780
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. (BR)

Ankara
Dated April 13, 1944
Rec'd 3:20 p.m., 14th.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

655, April 13, 4 p.m.
FOR WRB FROM THE AMBASSADOR
Department's 298, April 5.
Ankara 35.

APR 13 1944
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATIONS

The refugees referred to in my 564 of March 29
as having arrived on the SS MILKA are the same as those
referred to in the press report of April 1.

STEINHARDT

MRM

Rec'd WRB
4/15/44
JH

036

War R. Meyer BK

*Copy by
File*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Lisbon
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 14, 1944
NUMBER: 1106

CONTROL COPY

Transmission of the substance of the following para-
phrase to Leavitt, Joint Distribution Committee, New York,
through the War Refugee Board is requested by Joseph Schwartz.
Carrying 243 passengers the ship MILCA has arrived in
Istanbul from Constanza. It is expected that the International
Red Cross ship BELLACITA will arrive with (?) children and
15 adults aboard and the steamer MARITZA arrived on April 16
with 244 refugees. In groups of about fifty and at regular
intervals Turkish repatriates coming from France are arriving.
We are meeting entirely the costs of their care.

RECEIVED
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
APR 16 1944

NORWEB

*4/18/44
W. R. Meyer
to Leavitt*

DOR:MPL
4/17/44

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

036

*ms. Rhymer
J.W. Ball*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

*File
gbr*

CONTROL COPY

RECEIVED
APR 15 1944
STATE DEPT.
D. O. BOND

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

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

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

HARRISON

DGR:MPL
4/20/44

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

1036

CONTROL COPY

*in Refugee
Bel (Mrs
Pehle)*

MJK-383
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (BR)

Ankara

Dated April 9, 1944

Rec'd 9:05 p.m.

Jlb

Secretary of State;

Washington;

X
630, April 9, 5 p.m.

FOR THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Ankara's 30.
X

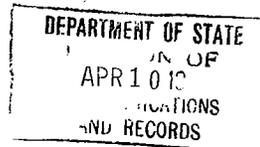
The following telegram has been sent to Ambassador
Harriman.

I deeply appreciate your cooperation in obtaining
safe conduct for SS MILKA which arrived in Istanbul
with 239 refugees who have since been moved to Palestine.
Also for SS MARITZA which arrived in Istanbul yesterday
and whose 244 refugees will leave for Palestine by rail
on April 10. Also for SS BELLACITTA which is now ex-
pected to sail from Constanza on April 9.

Repeated to Department.

EH

STEINHARDT



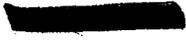
*War Refugee Board
Mr. Palko*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED *1 copy only*

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 8, 1944
NUMBER: 626

file

CONTROL COPY



The following message as Ankara's number 25 is from the Ambassador for the War Refugee Board.

Yesterday in Istanbul there arrived the Bulgarian SS MARITZA with two hundred and forty four Jewish refugees from Constanza. The authorities of Turkey have agreed today to allow all of the 244 refugees to land in Istanbul and to supply them with railroad transportation to Palestine leaving Istanbul on April 10 although only fifteen of the refugees have Turkish visas and Palestine entry certificates.

STEINHARDT

APR 11 1944

DOR:MPL
4/10/44

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

136

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 8, 1944
NUMBER: 626
X
[REDACTED]

As Ankara's number 26 the following message is from the Ambassador for the War Refugee Board.

Kindly inform Joseph Schwartz JDC representative at Lisbon that there being apparently a sufficiently large number of refugees to justify the use of ships besides the SS TARI if the safe conduct for that ship should be forthcoming and that the granting of a German safe conduct for the Turkish SS TARI not being certain, I urgently recommend that he try to conclude his negotiations for a Portuguese ship with the Portuguess shipping company. Foregoing refers to WRB No. 16.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/10/44

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Rains, Sargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Files

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

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Ankara
DATED: April 5, 1944
NUMBER: 298
✓

FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT,
ANKARA, TURKEY.

Reference your Nos. 547 of March 27, 564 of March 29 and
578 of March 30.

With respect to terms and conditions of charter of SS
TARI the Board recognized that you have made the best deal
possible under the circumstances, and as previously indicated
you are authorized to charter the boat on the terms offered.

The Board is deeply concerned with the turn which the
negotiations for a Turkish vessel have taken. For more
that two months you and Mr. Hirschmann have been carrying
on painstaking negotiations with the Turkish Government in
order to obtain boats for the evacuation of refugees from
Rumania. In these long drawn out negotiations the Turkish
Government has submitted many proposals and counter pro-
posals. Upon your recommendation the War Refugee Board has
immediately acceded to practically every condition imposed
by the Turkish Government even though neither you nor our-
selves considered some of them entirely reasonable. However
up to now the Turkish Government has failed to make a boat
available. Accordingly the Board finds it extremely difficult
to understand why the Turkish Government which continuously
has expressed its desire to cooperate in the refugee program
and which must be aware that the United States in view of
military necessities is not in a position to guarantee the
replacement of the SS TARI with a passenger vessel is further
delaying this highly urgent matter.

In the circumstances the Board believes, if you are in
accord, that the Board's views in the matter should be brought
to the attention of the Turkish Government in a frank manner
and the issue should be squarely put whether that Government
is prepared to cooperate by chartering the TARI without
further delay and upon the basis of the guarantee already of-
fered.

According to a press report from Ankara dated April 1

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18 1972

two hundred thirty nine Jewish refugees from Rumania who arrived illegally in Istanbul have been taken by rail to Palestine. We assume that these are the refugees who arrived on the SS MILKA and were referred to in your No. 564. The Board was surprised at the attitude of the Turkish Government reported in your cable and is gratified to learn that as a result of your intervention these refugees have been permitted transit through Turkey to Palestine. Your efforts deserve the highest commendation.

If the impression were created in this country that the Turkish Government is not fully cooperating in the refugee rescue program there would undoubtedly be a reaction here quite unfavorable to Turkey. In view of the fact that several private organizations have been active in the boat negotiations and are fully cognizant of the situation it is not improbable that unfavorable publicity here may result if the Turkish Government continues to maintain its present position.

These matters have been discussed with the Turkish Ambassador in Washington.

The Board and the Department are taking all possible measures to support the request of the International Red Cross for a German safe conduct for the TARI. Similar steps will also be taken in the case of the SS BELLACITTA mentioned in your No. 578.

This is WAB Cable to Ankara No. 18.

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Rains, Sergoy, Smith Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Files

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amlegation, Bern
DATED: April 5, 1944
NUMBER: 1146

War Refugee Bd (Mr. Pehle)

1 copy only

CONTROL COPY *file*

The War Refugee Board has been informed by Intercross that the BELLACITA will be available immediately for transportation of Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul as soon as safe conducts have been obtained. Intercross has requested safe conduct from all belligerents. Because of recent developments in the Balkans it is most urgent that the evacuation ship leave at once. In view of the humanitarian aspects of this matter, you are requested to ask the Swiss Government to support at once in its own name the request for safe conduct which Intercross made to the German Government. (The Legation is informed that the Swiss Government's support should not appear as intervention in a representative capacity but should appear as its own action).

HULL
(GLW)

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

DV:
LC:
EBOW:

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON, BERNE

April 3, 1944
2:30 p.m.

War Refugee Board advised by International Red Cross that Bulgarian boat "BELLACITA" is immediately available as soon as safe conducts obtained for transportation Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul. Interrossa has requested safe conducts of all belligerents. In view of recent Balkan developments it is most urgent that evacuation ship leave at once. In view of humanitarian aspects of the matter please ask Swiss Government immediately to support in its own name the request of Interrossa for safe conduct from the German Government.

cc: Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y.), Abrahamson, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Pehle, Stewart, Central Files (Rm. 194), Cable Control Files (Rm. 387 $\frac{1}{2}$).

JHMann:db 4/3/44

JHM

War Refugee Bd

(Mr. Peble

copy only

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amlegation, Stockholm
DATED: April 5, 1944
NUMBER: 593

CONTROL COPY *File*

The War Refugee Board has been informed by Interross that the BELLACITA will be available immediately for transportation of Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul as soon as safe conducts have been obtained. Interross has requested safe conduct from all belligerents. Because of recent developments in the Balkans it is most urgent that the evacuation ship leave at once. In view of the humanitarian aspects of this matter, you are requested to ask the Swedish Government to support at once in its own name the request for safe conduct which Interross made to the German Government. (The Legation is informed that the Swedish Government's support should not appear as intervention in a representative capacity but should appear as its own action). You are requested to inform the Government of Sweden that this Government agrees to such safe conduct for the movement of the BELLACITA for the purpose mentioned above as the British Government may agree to.

APR 10 1944

HULL
(GLW)

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

1037

WHL
DWA:ML
LC:
LBOB:

April 3, 1944

CABLE TO MINISTER JOHNSON, STOCKHOLM

2:30 p. m.

War Refugee Board advised by International Red Cross that Bulgarian boat "BELLAGITA" is immediately available as soon as safe conducts obtained for transportation Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul. Interross has requested safe conducts of all belligerents. In view of recent Balkan developments it is most urgent that evacuation ship leave at once. In view of humanitarian aspects of the matter please ask Swedish Government immediately to support in its own name the request of Interross for safe conduct from the German Government.

cc: Miss Chamsey (for the Sec'y.), Abrahamson, DuBois, Friedman, Hedel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Fehle, Stewart, Central Files (Rm. 194), Cable Control Files (Rm. 387 $\frac{1}{2}$).

JHmann:db 4/3/44

Control Copy

*was Replied by
Mr. Eddy*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

copy only

FROM: The American Embassy, Moscow
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 4, 1944
NUMBER: 1164
X

File 7

CONTROL COPY

The following message is for the War Refugee Board.

It is stated by the Foreign Office that the Government of the U.S.S.R. is prepared to aid in the safe passage of the Bulgarian ships BELLACITA, MARITZA and MILKA which are transporting Jewish refugees to Istanbul from Mangalia. As soon as information is supplied regarding recognition marking of ships, their courses, and dates of departure from Mangalia and arrival at Istanbul, the Russian Military authorities will be given the necessary instructions. Please refer to Department's message number 648 dated midnight March 21, 1944.

The following is sent to the Department of State. Since the Embassy does not know what codes are available at Geneva please repeat this message to the Consulate there for the Red Cross.

The foregoing repeated to Ambassador Steinhardt at Ankara.

HARRIMAN

Handwritten:
100-1-1000
CORI:MLA
4/5/44

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

037

CONTROL COPY

2-6 in Refugee Bd (Mr. Peble)

GAR-183
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (BR)

Istanbul
Dated April 1, 1944
Rec'd 7:40 p.m.

File

Secretary of State
Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 3 1944
BUREAU OF COMMUNICATIONS & RECORDS

218, April 1, 3 p.m.

239 Jewish refugees from Genent¹ were transferred yesterday at Istanbul from the large motorboat MILKA directly to a train destined for Palestine. One refugee stated that their exodus was expedited by the Rumanian Government.

BERRY

EJH

7 0 3 7

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 30, 1944
NUMBER: 573 (SECTION ONE)
X

The following message is from the Ambassador for the Department and the War Refugee Board. It is Ankara's number 15

On the general subject of refugees the Foreign Minister and I had a talk this morning.

1. Reference was made by me to his offer in the course of our previous talks (please refer to my number 455 dated March 15, 1944) to aid us in obtaining for the SS TARI a German safe conduct. As soon as possible Numan said he would take up the matter with Von Papen and try to persuade him to ask his Government to grant safe conduct to this ship. Numan was advised by me that a proposed charter for the SS TARI which contained provisions that I considered both unfair and unreasonable, had been submitted to us. His reply to this was that I should submit the proposed charter to him and he would strike out any unreasonable or unfair provisions, if we could not reach an agreement with the Turk State Steamship Lines.

STEINHARDT.

DCR:MPL
4/1/44

cc: Miss Chauncey (For the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Gohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Rains, Sargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Files.

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

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 30, 1944
NUMBER: 573 (SECTION THREE)

For the purpose of transporting these refugees to Palestine the suggestion was made by Numan that a ship be sent to Istanbul by either Great Britain or the United States. Upon being advised by me that no British or American ship could reach Istanbul Numan said he would be glad to take over any ship at Iskenderun or Mersin and under the Turkish flag bring it to Istanbul. From the Minister's remarks it was clear he is convinced that the present and past illegal traffic in refugees is organized and that he is not willing to have his hand forced by what he regards an organized illegal traffic in refugees. With regard to this he expressed regret that the MILKA incident should come up at the very time he and I were making arrangements for a large scale movement of refugees by means of an increased rail movement and the SS TARI. In addition to the seventy five transit visas being allocated every ten days he said he could not see how the single track railroad with two weekly trains from Istanbul to the Syrian frontier could accommodate more passengers in view of the steadily increasing congestion but that the Minister of Communications and he would discuss the matter. Numan also said that his government is seriously considering the suspension of all passenger traffic because the congestion was so bad at present.

5. Reference was then made by Numan to Eden's reply in the House of Commons to a question as to whether with regard to refugees the Turkish Government was collaborating with Great Britain. I was shown a statement by Numan which he proposed to issue regarding this humanitarian work in which he expresses the intention and the desire of the Government of Turkey to cooperate.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/1/44

cc: Miss Chauncey (For the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Marston, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pehle, Palfish, Raines, Sargoy, Smith, Stanshah, Stinson, Wainwright, R. D. Davis, etc.

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

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara.
The Secretary of State, Washington.
TE: March 31, 1947
NUMBER: 103 (SECRET)

For the purpose of transporting these refugees to Palestine one suggestion was made by Huzan that a ship be sent to Istanbul by either Great Britain or the United States. Upon being advised by me that no British or American ship could reach Istanbul Huzan said he would be glad to take over any ship at Iskenderun or Mersin and under the Turkish flag bring it to Istanbul. From the Minister's remarks it was clear he is convinced that the present and past illegal traffic in refugees is organized and that he is not willing to have his hand forced by what he regards as organized illegal traffic in refugees. With regard to this he expressed regret that the MIKA incident should come up at the very time he and I were making arrangements for a large scale movement of refugees by means of an increased rail movement and the SS TARI. In addition to the seventy five transit visas being allocated every ten days he said he could not see how the single track railroad with two weekly trains from Istanbul to the Syrian frontier could accommodate more passengers in view of the steadily increasing congestion but that the Minister of Communications and he would discuss the matter. Huzan also said that his government is seriously considering the suspension of all passenger traffic because the congestion was so bad at present.

5. Reference was then made by Huzan to Eden's reply in the House of Commons to a question as to whether with regard to refugees the Turkish Government was collaborating with Great Britain. I was shown a statement by Huzan which he proposed to issue regarding this humanitarian work in which he expresses the intention and the desire of the Government of Turkey to cooperate.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/1/47

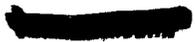
cc: Miss Chauncey (For the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Ganton, Hodal, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Harman, Necks, McGowan, Murphy, Peck, Pella, Pollak, Quinn, Sarnoy, Smith, Stoddish, Swartz, Weinstein, W. D. White, Clegg

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

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 30, 1944
NUMBER: 578

CONTROL


The following message is from Hirschman for the War Refugee Board and refers to my number 527 dated March 25, 1944. It is Ankara number 16.

It is my understanding that thus far a German safe-conduct for the SS BELLACITTA has not been forthcoming and that the Bucharest representative of the International Red Cross who seems to control the situation regarding this ship will not allow her to sail until such safe-conduct is obtained.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/1/44

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

038

*War, Refugee St.
Mrs. Peble*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

copy only

FROM: The American Ambassador, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 30, 1944
NUMBER: 579

REC-3
FPA

*File
8037*

CONTROL COPY

The following message is Ankara's number 17 and is from the Ambassador for the Department and the War Refugee Board.

Reference my number 573.

This afternoon the Minister for Foreign Affairs telephoned me and said that in the case of the approximately two hundred and fifty Jewish refugees without Turkish visas or Palestine entry certificates who were on board the SS MILLIA, he had decided to make an exception. The Minister said also that he had issued instructions that the refugees are to be allowed to land in Istanbul and that in order to accommodate the refugees he had asked the Minister of Communications to detach four non-passenger cars from the semi-weekly Istanbul-Aleppo train and attach four passenger cars.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/5/44

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

038

APR 4 1944

245
20000 SC
Use Escl
4-4-44

*was Refugee Bd
(Mr. Pille)
was (Mr. Bundy)
WFO (Warren)*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Embassy, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: March 29, 1944
NUMBER: 564

3/31/44

CONTROL COPY

The following message is from Hirschmann for the War Refugee Board and is Ankara's number 13. Please refer to my number 549 dated March 28, 1944.

On the grounds that they left Constanza without Turkish visas it is the intention of the authorities of Turkey to refuse permission for the landing in Istanbul of the approximately 260 Jewish refugees on the SS MILKA and they have so advised the British. In an effort to obtain a reversal of decision the British Minister is calling on the Secretary General of the Foreign Office and Ambassador Steinhardt is calling on the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Mindful of the foregoing, if considerable numbers of such refugees arrived without visas it will be extremely difficult to persuade the authorities of Turkey to agree to a further increase in the number of transit visas to be granted Jewish refugees from the Balkans.

STEINHARDT

DGR:MPL
3/31/44

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

10318

*was Refugee Bd.
(J.W. Pelli)*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: March 25, 1944
NUMBER: 527

*1 Copy
File
737*

CONTROL COPY

The following message from Hirschmann for the WRB.

No. 8.

Reference is made to Department's cable No. 230.

For over a month, we have been aware of the desire of certain individuals to make use of Bulgarian boats MILKA and MARITZA to transport Jewish refugees from Constanza to Istanbul but due to objection of International Red Cross representative in Bucharest to the use of these two vessels as unseaworthy, have taken no action in the matter. On the other hand, since the BELLAGITTA is regarded as seaworthy, we are attempting to expedite her from Constanza which is being delayed from day to day for a reason which we have been unable to discover. Either the failure to receive Soviet safe conduct thus far or some connection with illegal traffic in refugees may be the reason for delay.

STEINHARDT

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

038

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON
TO: AMEMBASSY, ANKARA
DATED: MARCH 22, 1944
NUMBER: 230
x

*War Refugee Bd
JWH:PKL*
copy
CONTROL COPY *file*

Following for Hirschmann from War Refugee Board.

War Refugee Board cable no. 7.

It is stated in a letter dated February 25, from Inter-
cross that the "Bellacitta", a Bulgarian vessel, is available
to transfer refugees at the rate of 150 per week to Istanbul
presumably from Mangalia. Red Cross also informed us that two
Bulgarian vessels, "Milka" and "Maritza", are also available
to Jewish organizations for this purpose but since Turkey is
not allowing more than 150 a week to go to Palestine by rail,
it is presumed that the last two mentioned boats will not be
usable since the "Bellacitta" can fill the limit imposed.
Red Cross as intermediary will give notification of sailings
to belligerents. In order to enable immediate refugee sail-
ings you are requested to do everything possible without les-
sening efforts concerning Swedish and Turkish boats. Red Cross
has requested and the United States has granted safe conducts
for the "Bellacitta" and cable is being sent to the American
Embassy at Moscow requesting that the Soviet Government take
prompt action on the British Government's safe conduct requests.

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

0 3 1 8

March 16, 1944

12:15 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Warren
FROM: Mr. Friedman

Please transmit the attached cable from the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and Hirschmann, Ankara, Turkey. Also attached for transmission is a related cable to Ambassador Harriman, Moscow, Russia.

JBW:bbk - 3/16/44

Cable #230
3/27/44

CABLE TO STEINHAERTZ AND WIRSCHINGEN, ANKARA, TURKEY FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WRB Cable Ankara No. 7

Informed by International Red Cross letter dated February 25 that in accordance with arrangement initiated by Rumanian Red Cross, Bulgarian boat "Bellacitta" available to transfer 150 refugees weekly presumably from Mangalia to Istanbul. Stop They also advise that two Bulgarian boats "karitza" and "Milka" at disposal Jewish institutions for this purpose but presumably not useable since Turkey not permitting rail transit to Palestine more than 150 weekly and "Bellacitta" capable filling this limit. Stop Red Cross as intermediary will notify sailings to belligerents. While continuing efforts re Turkish and Swedish boats suggest you do everything possible to enable immediate refugee sailings all boats available. Stop

Understand Red Cross has requested safe conduct "Bellacitta". We cabling Harriman requesting prompt action by Russian Government for Russian safe conduct request.

CONTROL COPY

*War Ref. for Bell
(Mr. Pellé)*

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

1 Copy only

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Moscow
DATED: March 21, 1944
NUMBER: 648

~~CONTROL COPY~~

Following is substance of message from WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

We are informed by International Red Cross that the Bulgarian boats, "Maritza", "Milka", and "Bellacitta", are immediately available to transport Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul. The Red Cross has requested safe conducts. If possible you should obtain Soviet safe conducts. Advise War Refugee Board, also Ambassador Steinhardt and Red Cross at Geneva.

HULL

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

CONTROL

COPIES:
DIED:
:02
:00

March 16, 1944

12:15 p.m.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Warren
FROM: Mr. Friedman

Please transmit the attached cable from the War Refugee Board to Ambassador Steinhardt and Hirschmann, Ankara, Turkey. Also attached for transmission is a related cable to Ambassador Harriman, Moscow, Russia.

JBY:bbk - 3/16/44

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR HARRIMAN, MOSCOW, RUSSIA FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Informed by International Red Cross that Bulgarian boats
"Bellacitta," "Milka," "Maritza" immediately available for
transportation Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul Stop Red
Cross has requested safe conducts Stop Please try to obtain Soviet
safe conducts and inform Red Cross Geneva and Ambassador Steinhardt
as well as War Refugee Board

M E M O R A N D U M

March 18, 1944

TO: Mr. Friedman

FROM: B. A.

Three Bulgarian Boats

Information re Bulgarian boats received by telephone by McCormack from Lt. French, Bureau of Ships, U. S. Navy (Phone 2950):

Bellacitza - 83 gr. tons
Milca - 150 gr. tons
Maritza - 2910 gr. tons

SS. Maritza, built in 1936, is a combined passenger-freight boat.

According to Lloyd's - of German registry, but the Navy confirms that it is Bulgarian now.

Navy was looking for Maritza, hoping to destroy her. (Probably this is a special reason why Bulgarians anxious to put her into refugee service!)

Since SS. Maritza so superior to others, should we not lay our hands on her rather than on Bellacitza? She could be used for transport down to Aegean, Palestine, etc., and not only to Istanbul, if British give safe conduct.

— Lt. French, Turkey

Bureau of Ships
Navy 2950

Bellactsa 83 gr. tons

Milca 150 " "

Maritza 2910 " "

Maritza, built 1936, pass.-fr.

Formerly German (Lloyd's),
but Navy confirms Bulgarian,
Navy looking for her to
destroy her.

(via McCormack)

— March 16. —

Turkey

Warren will
prepare & send
copy of this
Rudt
Hirschman

CABLE TO STEINHARDT FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

3/5/44
JBF

In a cable of January 5, 1944 from Geneva, State Department was advised that the Rumanian Red Cross had asked the International Red Cross to secure safe conduct permits covering voyages of a Bulgarian boat named "^{Ballacita}Ballacita" for three months. The boat was to make weekly voyages over this period carrying 150 Jewish children on each from Mangalia to Istanbul for eventual transportation to Palestine. Visas and transportation had been assured. The program had been authorized by the Rumanian and Turkish Governments.

On January 7, the United States accorded safe conduct to the "^{Ballacita}Ballacita".

On February 17, it was reported from Geneva to the State Department that the British had granted safe conduct but that similar permits from the Russian and German Governments had not been obtained. The International Red Cross at Geneva accordingly ^{declined} refused to accept responsibility for guaranteeing the safe conduct of the boat on its scheduled trips but agreed that it would notify the interested governments of the facts involved. It was ^{apparently} considered that a further postponement of the proposed evacuation was undesirable and it is expected that operations may have commenced by the time you receive this advice. Meanwhile we are contacting Geneva for a further report on this matter.

Above is for your information. Please advise us of any developments noted by you.

Hirschman's file



e.

1139

div
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Distribution of true reading only by special arrangement.

War Ref Bd - Pde
OUTGOING TELEGRAM DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

War Refugee Board
AMEMBASSY,
ANKARA.
641X

CONTROL COPY
JUL 19 1944
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

The following for Hirschmann is WRB cable 82.

We have been advised by Minister Johnson that Mr. Aurel Theodoru Director of Service Maritime Roumaine (a government enterprise) has been in Stockholm and has mentioned 12,000,000 kronor as a preliminary figure for the sale of the BESSARABIA and the TRANSYLVANIA, the above price apparently covering both ships. Theodoru suggested that these vessels be purchased for refugee evacuation from Constanza. He asserted that if the vessels were purchased by Interross or the Swedish Red Cross, as a condition of the sale the Rumanian Government would guarantee to grant safe-conduct and would further guarantee to obtain a German safe-conduct. Theodoru proposed that the purchase price of the two vessels be deposited in Sweden with a guarantee that the funds would be made available for purchases of goods for delivery in Rumania after the war. According to the proposal these goods could be held blocked in Sweden in the name of the group or organization purchasing or chartering the ships.

be closed
Part of this information
is classified

The Board is cognizant of the information concerning these ships furnished in your report of February 20 and your 1063 of June 14 and also that certain small vessels apparently have now been obtained for refugee evacuation from Rumania. However we

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

TO BE SENT IN [REDACTED]

-2-#641, July 17, 7 p.m., to Ankara

would appreciate your reaction to the above proposal.

HULL
(GHW)

S/CR
HRB:MMV:KO
7/17/44

NE NOE

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

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

We have been advised by Minister Johnson that Mr. Aurel Theodoru Director of Service Maritime Roumaine (a government enterprise) has been in Stockholm and has mentioned 12,000,000 Kroner as a preliminary figure for the sale of the Bessarabia and the Transylvania, the above price apparently covering both ships. Theodoru suggested that these vessels be purchased for refugee evacuation from Constanza. He asserted that if the vessels were purchased by Intercross or the Swedish Red Cross, as a condition of the sale the Rumanian Government would guarantee to grant safe-conduct and would further guarantee to obtain a German safe-conduct. Theodoru proposed that the purchase price of the two vessels be deposited in Sweden with a guarantee that the funds would be made available for purchases of goods for delivery in Rumania after the war. According to the proposal these goods could be held blocked in Sweden in the name of the group or organization purchasing or chartering the ships.

The Board is cognizant of the information concerning these ships furnished in your report of February 20 and your 1083 of June 14 and also that certain small vessels apparently have now been obtained for refugee evacuation from Rumania. However we would appreciate your reaction to the above proposal.

THIS IS WRE CABLE TO ANKARA NO. 52.

1:50 p.m.
July 15, 1944

MJMarkairo 7/15/44

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Rohn, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel,
Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Stewart, Central Files, Cable Control Files

DEPARTMENT
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STATE

OUTGOING
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July 17, 1944
DIVISION OF
10 p.m.

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

AMLEGATION,

STOCKHOLM,
1430

The cable below is WRB no. 56.

Please refer to your 2538 of July 9 concerning the
proposal to sell the Bessarabia and Transylvania.

We are communicating the Rumanian proposal to the
embassy in Ankara for comment.

HULL
(GLW)

WRB:MMV:KG S/CR NOE NE
7/17/44

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

1040

CABLE TO MINISTER JOHNSON IN STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Please refer to your 2538 of July 9 concerning the proposal to sell the Bessarabia and Transylvania.

We are communicating the Rumanian proposal to the embassy in Ankara for comment.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO STOCKHOLM NO. 56.

1:50 p.m.
July 15, 1944

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

WJMarkain 7/15/44

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1040

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
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War Ref. Dr. - Mr. Pelle

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RA-999
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Stockholm
Dated July 9, 1944
Rec'd 4:50 p.m.

4013

Secretary of State
Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JUL 11 1944

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS & RECORDS

X
2538, July 9, 11 a.m.

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

In connection with the general transportation problem involved in evacuation operations from the Balkans the following may be of interest. During the past week Mr. Aurel Theodoru, director of Service Maritime Roumaine (a government enterprise) has been in Stockholm. (This is our 48 for War Refugee Board in response to their No. 3622, 10 p.m.) According to him the Rumanian Government is extremely anxious to sell two of its vessels, SS TRANSYLVANIA and SS BESARABIA, presently tied up at Istanbul. These he said are virtually new combined passenger and cargo vessels of 6500 tons with sleeping accommodations for 550 each. On short trips the vessels he added could accommodate over 2000 persons each. Apparently the Rumanians are very anxious to sell these vessels for a variety of reasons and have mentioned a preliminary figure of twelve million kronor for both

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

-2- 2538, July 9, 11 a.m. from Stockholm

kronor for both vessels. The alleged original cost of each was twelve million and under present costs are allegedly valued at thirty five million kronor. Theodoru has suggested that the vessels be purchased for refugee evacuation from Constanza. If the boats are purchased by the International Red Cross or the Swedish Red Cross the Rumanians, he asserted, would guarantee safe conduct and would further guarantee, as a condition of sale of the vessels, to obtain German safe conduct. Theodoru seems convinced that the Rumanians could obtain full assurances of such safe conduct. Theodoru also proposes that the purchase price of the vessels be deposited in Sweden with a guarantee that the funds be available for purchase of goods for delivery in Rumania after the war. These goods it is proposed can be held blocked in Sweden in the name of the group or organization purchasing or chartering the vessels. It is stated that the vessels are in first class condition and available for immediate use.

Whether the proposal is desirable from our point of view could, it would seem, only be determined on information not available here, such as whether the vessels are tied up at Istanbul for the duration, whether

-3- 2538, July 9, 11 a.m. from Stockholm

whether their operation by Rumanians would be harmful to us, whether the vessels are necessary to us, etc. Accordingly the Legation in reporting the above is not (repeat not) in position to make recommendation.

JOHNSON

WSB:BB