PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO AND THRU TURKEY

VOL. 6

11. LETTERS AND REPORTS FROM HIRSCHMANN

12. "PRESS CONFERENCE", OCTOBER 17, 1944.

13. NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

14. LETTERS FROM KATZKI

15. RESNICK'S REPORTS

WAR REFUGEE BOARD RECORDS
October 24, 1944

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

Dear John:

I found among my papers the enclosed letter which, for reasons of expedition, I felt it desirable not to put into the mail at the time, and to bring to you directly.

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Dear John:

Mr. Joseph Klarman, representative of the Revisionist movement of Palestine and correspondent of the Revisionist paper "Hamashkif", Tel-Aviv, the "Jewish Telegraphic Agency" of London, the "Jewish Times" of London, and the "Jewish Herald" of Johannesburg, employed his imagination and wrote the statement below which appeared in the "Hamashkif" of September 13 and probably in the other papers listed above:

"Mr. I. Hirschmann, representative of the WRB to Turkey disclosed in the middle of August that it was his opinion that emigration from Balkan countries is not necessary any longer. With a liberated Bulgaria and Rumania it is evident that the only function of the WRB will consist in pressure to be put on the respective governments, including the Hungarians, to improve conditions for Jews in their countries.

"This change in Mr. Hirschmann's policy means that instead of efforts to save Hungarian, Rumanian and Bulgarian Jews and refugees in these countries, they will have to stay there and wait for the results of his endeavor to obtain for them equal rights."

Since it is a complete distortion of the truth and a misrepresentation of the policy of the Board, and in view of the fact that it is entirely probable that such a statement will be or has been picked up by other papers here or in the United States for republication, I have issued the enclosed affirmative statement covering the Board's policy with respect to its program from its headquarters in Turkey.

I deemed it desirable that you should be informed about this.

Cordially yours,

J. W. Pehle, Esquire
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Encl.
In a statement issued today by Mr. Ira A. Hirschmann, special representative in Turkey of the war refugee board of the United States, he reaffirmed the policy of the board, stating:

The important political and military events which have occurred in the last weeks in Bulgaria and Romania have unquestionably served to put the condition of the stricken Jews and other minorities in those countries, little is known, as yet, of the conditions of the Jewish populations in those countries, who suffered so sorely in the last few years, but the revocation of the anti-Jewish laws in Bulgaria, initiated by the war refugee board with the Bogdanov government, and the categorical reinstatement of the rights of all citizens in Romania, in the new anti-Jewish agreement, will unquestionably provide the basis for those Jews to re-establish their lives as citizens in their own countries. In undoubtly, there will be a difficult, convulsive period in which the Jewish citizens will require all the help that can come from inside and outside sources.

These events, promising, we hope, the eventual return to a new normal life for the Jewish citizens in these countries, do not in the slightest degree alter the policy of the war refugee board as set forth by President Roosevelt in his order of January 22, 1944. The rescue of all citizens in danger of death, wherever they are and wherever they are, will be aided by the representatives of this Board. It is assumed that the conditions in Bulgaria and Romania have been ameliorated to a point where there is little danger of annihilation from the
The situation in Hungary is entirely different. The condition of the Jewish population in that country, as well as Slovakia, according to unofficial reports received by us, remains critical; and all possible measures for rescue are being pressed without let-up by the UNRRA refugee board and its representatives in Istanbul and elsewhere. The battle-front where sporadic fighting is now occurring in Transylvania may have sealed up the possibility of escape in the direction of Turkey from Hungary, but every means for rescue is being explored and exploited, with all respect at the UNRRA refugee board's command, in cooperation with all other responsible agencies in the field.
Istanbul, 21.9.1944

Under the headline "Radical change in policy of the WR
Refugee Board" reports the Revisionist paper "Hamashki";
Tel-aviv, September 13, 1944:

"Mr. I. Hirschmann, representative of the WRB to Turkey,
disclosed in the middle of August, that it was his opinion, that
emigration from Balkan countries is not necessary any longer.
With a liberated Bulgaria and Rumania it is evident, that the
only function of the WRB will consist in pressure to be put on
the respective governments, including the Hungarians, to improve
conditions for Jews in their countries.

"This change in Mr. Hirschmann's policy means, that instead
of efforts to save Hungarian, Rumanian and Bulgarian Jews and
refugees in these countries, they will have to stay there and wait
for the results of his endeavor to obtain for them equal rights."

We shall be delighted to publish an authorized statement in
the Palestine press.
Ankara, October 26, 1944

No. 308

Subject: Forwarding summary report from
Mr. Ira A. Hirshmann, Representative of the US Refugee Board, to
Mr. John Fehlé, Executive Director of the "ar Refuge Board.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith a summary
report from Mr. Ira A. Hirshmann, Representative
of the US Refugee Board, to Mr. John Fehlé,
Executive Director of the "ar Refuge Board, Wash-
ington, covering efforts made by Mr. Hirshmann and
the Embassy to rescue oppressed minorities from
axis-occupied Europe.

Respectfully yours,

Lawrence A. Steinhardt

Enclosure:

1/ Summary report from
Mr. Ira A. Hirshmann

File No. 840.1

To the Department in original and microphotograph.
Ankara, Turkey
October 4, 1944

Mr. John H. Kelly, Executive Director
War Refugees Board,
Washington,

Dear Mr. Kelly:

The following is a summary of the operations of the
War Refugees Board in Turkey from the date of my
appointment, June 12, until my departure on October 4, 1944.
Most of the material contained herein has been fully
detailed in my report dispatched to you by Ambassador
Stalinovitch on September 30, but I deem it advisable to
offer a record of the Board's operations in a final report,
which includes the activities in Turkey up to and including
October 4, immediately prior to my departure for the
United States.

I. Coordination.

Following my instruction to send Menach in Cairo, a
report was submitted to Ambassador Stalinovitch and dispatched
to you on July 3, covering Menach's visit to Turkey and
subsequently to Cairo. No further action was taken in
this matter, following the receipt of telegram of instruction
from the Department.

2. Coordination of Organizational Activities in Istanbul.

Due to the influx in Turkey of members of representatives of
various relief and rescue agencies, a situation has arisen which resulted in confusion, overlapping of
efforts, embarrassment to Ambassador Stalinovitch, and an un-
favorable reaction in the Turkish Foreign Office. At
Ambassador Stalinovitch's initiative, a single overall
committee was organized which includes representatives of
each interested agency in Turkey. This committee has met
every several occasions, for the purpose of interchanging
information.

In addition, a small working committee, which includes
the leading representatives of the most active organizations
here, was established to deal with day-to-day problems.
Both committees were established under War Refugees Board
leadership, and continue to act under our direction. This
procedure resulted in the concentration and direction of
the activities of the various organizations, and placed
the Consulate in Istanbul and the Embassy in Ankara in a
more effective position to lend their aid and influence to
the rescue work recorded hereafter. At the same time,
it came to be an effective liaison and cooperation of the
Embassy with the Turkish Foreign Office in these matters.

J. Romania.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept., Letter, 1972
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 18, 1972
A. Romania:

A.1. Two informal conferences with Mr. Alexander Cristian, Romanian Minister to Athens, led to the following results:

(1) The Romanian Government, and particularly Mr. Antonescu, Romanian Vice President of the Council of Ministers, was informed again of the outrages opinion in the United States with respect to the treatment of human and Jewish citizens in that country. As the result of our representations and the shared desire of the American Government to win some measure of good-will in the United States, it became apparent that a relatively more humane approach to the problem of the Jewish people in Romania was resulting.

(2) In connection with the foregoing, Mr. Cristian was helpful on several occasions in securing information for us relating to Jewish affairs in Romania. Information was given to the Council for the amendment of statute against the Jews. This statement manifested itself in a willingness and insistence on the part of the Romanian Government to assure the clandestine entry into Romania of refugees coming from Hungary, and to grant transit facilities to Hungarian refugees. It was reported that approximately 3500 to 4000 Hungarians entered Romania with the tacit consent of the Romanian Government during this period, in spite of an official edict issued by Marshal von Killinger, German Minister to Athens (since deceased) to evacuate any refugees who have succeeded in escaping from Hungary into Romania.

B. Without the strong representations of ambassador Steinbau, the new refugee board would not have been able to succeed in its operations in bringing 262 persons who arrived in Istanbul by sea from Romania during the period of January-February, 1944. These refugees arrived without Turkish visas. Such visas were issued to them upon their arrival, enabling them to continue their migration without delay to Palestine. Part of the arrangements made by the ambassador with the Turkish Ministry of Communications resulted in the provision of special trains to transport these refugees from Istanbul to the Syrian border.

C. In the instance of the.poverty disaster, the Turkish Foreign Office instructed the Turkish Red Crescent to care for the safe arrival of the Iraqi survivors and the Hilbi passengers, who were permitted to proceed overland from Lamon to Istanbul under the foreign office and the Crescent auspices and protection. In view of the apparent dangers lurking in the Black Sea, it was essential that the passengers of the Hilbi were not exposed to further dangers of sea transport, and were provided with the means for their removal to Istanbul by land.

De preliminary steps were taken to secure permission to dispatch Turkish passenger vessels to Constanta for the evacuation
evacuation of refugees from Rumelia. The change in the political scene during early August, especially the Turkish-German diplomatic break, brought this initiative to a halt.

Bulgaria

A. Jewish population in Bulgaria. There are about 85,000 Jews in Bulgaria, about 17,000 to 18,000 have been deported, mostly from Thrace and Macedonia.

B. The exchange of Jewish refugees for German nationals. On July 6, 1944, an exchange of 113 Germans for 283 Jewish refugees took place in Istanbul, under the auspices of the Turkish Red Crescent. The 283 Jewish refugees were chosen by the Gestapo from a list submitted by the Jewish Agency. We are informed that there are three to four thousand such exchange certificates still outstanding.

C. Refugees by land from Bulgaria, 468 persons, including 46 children under the children’s scheme, entered Turkey from Bulgaria during the first six months of 1944. The Turkish Foreign Office, at the insistence of the British and American Embassy, agreed to admit all refugees to enter Turkey in transit to Palestine.

D. Several informal conferences were arranged through channels of the international Red Cross with Colonel Balabanoff, Bulgarian Minister to London. The apparent desire of the Bulgarian (Bagryanov) Government to win the good-will of the American people at that time and the obvious importance in the war of non-transfer of Jewish refugees from Bulgaria, supported the possibility of saving the Jewish population within Bulgaria, instead of continuing the sporadic efforts to bring out a relatively few victims.

With the aid of Ambassador Steinhardt, Balabanoff was pressed during these conversations and through the intervention of other intermediaries to the sheriff of the Bulgarian anti-Jewish laws and the immediate, complete, reinstatement of the Bulgarian Jewish population to its former rights and liberties. These views were placed before the Bagryanov Government. Although it was reported at one time, through most reliable sources, that this question would be considered secondary to the major ones under discussion, at the special convocation of Parliament on August 17 we succeeded in having the question included on the agenda. On August 28, the fused Nirenberg Anti-Jewish laws were formally withdrawn. This constituted the first revocation of anti-Jewish legislation by any Axis country or satellite, since the nefarious campaign preceding and following the war.

During the conversations above-mentioned, a statement in writing was secured from Balabanoff, setting forth that the Bagryanov Government was categorically opposed to the anti-Jewish activities of the preceding Bulgarian government, and prevailing that steps would be taken to annul the anti-Jewish laws at the first opportunity. Permission to publish...
publish this statement was also later assured from Stamboloff.

2. The steps in principle taken by the Magyaro
Government in connection with the reinstatement of the Jewish
Bulgarian population were implemented and enforced by the
successing Bulgarian Governments. On September 22 the
present Governor General issued the statement quoted
below, in the radio and press:

"(1). The Bulgarian Government takes a positive
attitude regarding the establishment of a Jewish State in
Palestine.

"(2). The Bulgarian Government has no objection and
will make no difficulties for those Jews who wish to emigrate
to Palestine. Regarding them as Bulgarian citizens who
enjoy full rights, the government will require of them merely
that they comply with all laws or regulations obligatory
for all citizens of the country.

"(3). The Government has suspended all exclusive laws
of anti-Jewish character. Such an exclusive law was that
establishing a tax to the extent of 20 to 25 per cent of
the value of all Jewish property. This tax, being the result
of a vicious law, was discriminatory against the Jews. The
amount of the tax will now be returned, but because of Bulgaria's
difficult financial situation, such amount will be transferred
into a state loan of definite security.

"(4). The Jews now enjoy full equality of rights, and
live under the new conditions and in freedom as do other
Bulgarian nationals.

"The following procedure will be applied to the property
formerly held and confiscated:

"Property, first rights, and other assets still owned
by the State will be returned to the Jews. There will
remain to be settled the question of assets about which
legal obligations have arisen between the State and private
interests. In such a case as to which property or firms have
been transferred to third parties, or where other obligatory
relations have been created during the course of the last
few years, the solution of this problem is a question of
time. The Government will find the means to solve it in
such fashion as not to disturb the traditional friendship
and mutual understanding between Bulgarians and Jews. The
Government in being assisted in this matter by Jewish people
who have confidence in it. The Government will solve the
problem in accordance with national relations between a
democratic State and its citizens.

"In cases where fictitious property transfers have been
made by Jews to Bulgarians, such property will be automatically
returned to its lawful owner. In cases of fraudulent transfer,
the public authority will make investigations and
will proceed in favor of the injured party."
5. On August 23, agreement and permission were secured for the Bulgarian vessels YULA and PIRNA to make several voyages to carry refugees from Bulgaria to Teleorman where the realization of this scheme was interrupted by political events in the Balkans. Ultimately, the YULA was sunk, reportedly on August 26, while on route from Balchik, Bulgaria, to Jaffa, to embark passengers at the latter port. The voyage of the PIRNA is now uncertain. Thus far, all emigration from Bulgaria has taken place via railroad.

6. Hungary

4. A flue of refugee emigration from Hungary made possible by fulfillment of a result of the pronouncement of August 23rd on July 25, 1943. It stated that Jewish people in certain categories and under certain limiting conditions were to be permitted to emigrate to Palestine, Sweden, and elsewhere. The Board maintained the Jewish Legation in Bucharest in the arrangement for 2,500 people to have all of their arrangements and in order for emigration to Palestine, Thirteenth and Turkey had previously been arranged for them by the Hungarian Government. Hungarian transport visas were also in the process of obtaining. The Hungarian Government, through Tesser, had agreed, in principle, not on request, to permit the Hungarian refugees to remain in Romania for a brief period until transportation could be arranged. Meanwhile, investigations were made on the possibility of transporting the refugees from Bucharest via Bulgaria to Accaiah (Transylvania had become a scene of Hungarian military operations). As a result of such investigations none of the Hungarian refugees to date have been permitted to leave by this route.

3. Through Sweden's intervention, an informal and confidential interview was held with Baron Tesser, Counselor of the Hungarian Legation in Bucharest. A proceeding of the categories of Hungarian Jewish people who might be permitted to leave Hungary was sought. Baron Tesser informed me that at that time (August 7) that it could be advisable, before requesting further concessions, to determine whether the first steps contained in the decree could succeed. He expressed some skepticism regarding the practicability of August 23rd's plan.

6. Greece

There has been a sporadic movement, which we have encouraged, of refugees from Greece to Turkey by sea. This has taken place on a more or less informal basis, an opportunity afforded. Nevertheless, since October, 1943, approximately
approximately 300 Greek refugees have entered Turkey in
this manner, and with the aid of the Turkish authorities
have been expedited to Palestine. Inquiry disclosed that
this movement from Greece might be accelerated and augmented
if the Turkish authorities would be willing to designate a
special base from which refugee rescue operations might be
specifically undertaken. At our request, the Embassy dis-
cussed the matter with the Turkish Foreign Office, which
agreed to issue the necessary instructions. With this
announcement, inquiry into the practicability of establishing
a base was made by Kastaki at Izmir. Informed opinion there
was that the establishment of a special base in Turkey at
this time to direct the evacuation of refugees from Greece
is not feasible because of indications of early evacuation
of Greece by the Germans.

7. Turkey.

Reference has been made previously to the cooperation
of the Turkish Foreign Office in issuing Turkish transit
visas to refugees who entered the country by sea. A number
of other proposals were made to the Turkish Foreign Office
by the American Embassy, the British Embassy, and both
Sanatorium jointly, in which the cooperation and assistance
of the Foreign Office was requested for the purpose of
expanding rescue activities from Hungary, Russia and
Bulgaria. In order to consolidate in an overall agreement
the various understandings with the Foreign Office, it was
agreed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the
Turkish transit visas to any number of Jews who might
apply for them at the Turkish Consulate in Budapest, who
were in possession of any one of four different documents,
an announcement was made. Similar instructions were
to be sent to the Turkish Consulate in Constanta and
Bucharest, authorizing them to issue up to 400 visas between
them every ten days to applicants, bearers of similar
documents. At first, the Turkish Foreign Office desired
to limit entry into Turkey from Russia and Bulgaria to
persons arriving by sea, but this was subsequently amended
to include rail transportation, until such time as it could
be demonstrated that voyages by sea could be made with
some degree of regularity. The Foreign Office also under-
took to request the Ministry of the Interior to admit into
Turkey without delay and without reference to obtain any
persons arriving at Turkey's land borders without Turkish
visas, provided each person was in possession of one of
the four types of documents referred to above.

This broad concession on the part of the Turkish
Foreign Office can be attributed also to a desire on the
part of the Turkish authorities to cooperate with the
United States Government in the work under the
auspices of the War Refugee Board and to the confidence
and respect in which it holds Ambassador Steinhardt.

8. United States Visa Instructions.

Instructions have been received by the American
Consulate General in Istanbul, as a result of war refugee
Board discussions with the State Department, authorizing the issuance of United States visas for which advisory approval had been granted subsequent to July 1, 1931, or which have expired. These instructions are in force in certain countries, and were to be issued under certain circumstances and conditions. They are subsequently needed to include specified minor relatives of American citizens or of aliens legally admitted into the United States. The Turkish Foreign office has been informed thereof, in connection with the issuance of Turkish transit visas, and such requests are now being included under the authorities for persons to whom the Turkish Foreign Office instructions, relative to the issuance of Turkish transit visas referred to above, apply. Developments in the Balkans up to the present time have provided any substantial activity to implement the intent of the State Department's instructions.

Observations

The political and military changes in the Balkans since the capitulation of the Bulgarian government on August 31, 1934, have fundamentally altered the possibilities of rescue through Turkey. It was hoped, at the beginning of August, that rescue and evacuation from Turkey would be available without too much delay, and that information regarding the precise status of the Jewish populations of their own countries, and those who had immigrated to them, would be available. For reasons well justified such has not been the case.

Russia has become a field of military operations. At the present writing, operations fighting is continuing in Transylvania, which promises to become a major battle-line of the Austro-Hungarian front. For the present, this has ended the possibilities of evacuation from Hungary through Russia. No information has been forthcoming from Russia, except an occasional letter from Zitzin, representing the Jewish Agency, and Feldman, of the Joint Distribution Committee. Feldman has urgently requested basic supplies for an impoverished Jewish population. Since the Board's definition of our activities precludes mass work, we have not pursued any efforts in this direction, although Ambassador Dobroeden has written at the approved time, the efforts of Russian, the representative of the Joint Distribution Committee, to enter Romania and Bulgaria for the purpose of surveying the situation for the purpose of introducing relief operations.

In Bulgaria, the Jewish newspaper correspondent and informal representatives of Jewish organizations succeeded in arriving in Sofia. They reported a city, formerly populated by 34,000 people, reduced to a population of some 2,000. The powers of the Bulgarian government to the Jews and the Jewish community board to revoke the anti-Jewish laws was upheld by the Bulgarian Government. In addition, the rights and protection of the Jewish population are
being restored as rapidly as possible, under fairly chaotic conditions.

Under the above circumstances, it appears at this writing that the major program of the War Refugees Board, operating through Turkey, is concluding. There remains, in my opinion, further operations in Bulgaria, Romania, and also Hungary when the latter is liberated. The possibility of any further operations from Turkey, however, are dependent upon the newly emerged military and political situation, whereas Poland appears to be playing a dominant role, and in which case efforts must be guided entirely by the recommendations of missions in Bulgaria and Romania and, in fact, eventually Hungary.

Conclusions.

As observed in my previous report, the establishment of the War Refugees Board and the dispatch of representatives to Turkey working with the sympathetic and resourceful aid of Ambassador Batchelor resulted in the rescue of thousands of refugees who were destined for Palestine. It is confirmed if these refugees would have been permitted to remain in Turkey and proceed to Palestine without the personal intervention of the Ambassador and the Board representatives on the scene in Turkey. It bears repetition that it is largely due to the Board, which has emphasized its activity and the success of the operation, that the operation created a year ago. There is no doubt that the evidence at hand that additional thousands of refugees could have been saved. It is evident that the mere existence of the Board and its representatives in Turkey acted as a catalytic agent in arresting the wave of the destitute and tortured people in the Balkans, who had reached a low ebb of existence. It is consistently reported by members of refugees who had been through Turkey that the existence of the Board and the work by the Embassy in Turkey was known throughout the Balkans, and that it provided for the victims a ray of hope which resulted in lifting their own morale and an undeniable self-sustaining effort on their own part. In retrospect, and as a precedent, the establishment of the War Refugees Board can be viewed as a sharp and vitally useful instrument for rescues in the face of the mechanics brought to bear in warfare against non-participating, innocent populations.

The example is cited of the abandonment of the disease-ridden Transylvanian camps, through the initiative of the Board with Yozell, in March, 1944. Several thousand of the children rescued from this camp have passed through Turkey into Palestine.

The final phase of the Board's program in establishing a supplementary program of saving the populations within their own country, instead of attempting the sporadic rescue of small groups during the closing days of the war should
Should also be emphasized. While there is reason to believe that the anti-Semitic laws in Bulgaria, for example, would have been revoked at some stage in the liberation of these countries after their occupation, it is stated on high authority from the Bulgarians themselves that the Jewish question was considered an incidental one, and was to be treated at a convenient later hour. It is believed that every day in which the 45,000 reinstated Bulgarian Jewish citizens were given back their freedom in a day was for freedom.

Finally, as a blueprint for peace, the precedent established by Bulgaria in making its first bold and decisive step in the direction of the freeing of the first victims of the war, the Jewish population, is one that may hold for the fall of the other satellites, and in any case itself.

Sincerely submitted,

[Name]
Attache
Dear Sir:
The Summary Report which I have written at your suggestion to take back with me to the United States. After you have edited it, I should appreciate it if you would direct someone to copy it for hektograph so that it can be complete for our signatures and ready for me to take along with me on Wednesday morning.

I. A. Hirschmann
Ankara, October 4, 1944

Mr.

Subject: Forwarding summary report from Dr. Ira Hirschmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Pehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith a summary report from Dr. Ira Hirschmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Pehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, Washington, covering efforts made by Dr. Hirschmann and the embassy to rescue oppressed minorities from axis-occupied Europe.

Respectfully yours,

Enclosure: Report as described.
Mr. John W. Pehle, Executive Director
War Refugees Board
Washington

Dear Mr. Pehle:

The following is a summary of the operations of the War Refugees board in Turkey from the date of my second incumbency, June 18, until my departure on October 4, 1944. Most of the material condensed herein has been fully elaborated in my report dispatched to you by Ambassador Steinhardt on September 11, but I deem it desirable to offer a resume of the Board's operations in a final report, which includes the activities in Turkey up to and including October 4, immediately prior to my departure for the United States.

1. Joel Brandt.

Following my interview of Joel Brandt in Cairo, a report was submitted to Ambassador Steinhardt and dispatched to you on July 3, covering Brandt's representations in Turkey and thereafter in Cairo. No further action was taken in this matter, following the receipt of telegrams of instruction from the Department.

2. Coordination of Organizational Activities in Istanbul.

Due to the influx in Turkey of numbers of representatives of various relief and rescue agencies, a situation had arisen which resulted in confusion, overlapping of efforts, embarrassment to Ambassador Steinhardt, and an unfavorable reaction in the Turkish Foreign Office. At Ambassador Steinhardt's initiative, a single overall committee was organized which includes
representatives of all interested agencies in Turkey. This committee has met on several occasions, for the purpose of interchanging information.

In addition, a small working committee, which includes the leading representatives of the most active organizations here, was established to deal with day-to-day problems. Both committees were established under War Refugee Board leadership, and continue to act under our direction. This procedure resulted in the concentration and definition of the activities of the various organizations, and placed the Consulate in Istanbul and the Embassy in Ankara in a more effective position to lend their aid and influence to the rescue work recorded heretofore. At the same time, it added to the effective liaison and cooperation of the Embassy with the Turkish Foreign Office in these matters.

2. Rumania.

A. Two informal conferences with Mr. Alexander Cretzianu, Rumanian Minister to Ankara, led to the following results:

(1) The Rumanian Government, and particularly Mihal Antonescu, Rumanian Vice President of the Council of Ministers, was informed again of the outraged opinion in the United States with respect to the treatment by Rumania of the minorities and Jewish citizens in that country. As the result of our representations and the stated desire of the Rumanian Government to win some measure of good-will in the United States, it became apparent that a relatively more humane approach to the problems of the Jewish people in Rumania was resulting;

(2) In connection with the foregoing, Mr. Cretzianu was helpful on several occasions in securing information for me relating to Jewish affairs in Rumania. Impetus was given
to the general relaxation of strictures against the Jews. This abatement manifested itself in a willingness and permission on the part of the Rumanian Government to condone the clandestine entry into Rumania of refugees coming from Hungary, and to grant transit facilities to Hungarian refugees. It was reported that approximately 3500 to 4000 Hungarians entered Rumania with the tacit consent of the Rumanian Government during this period, in spite of an official edict issued by Baron von Killinger, German Minister to Rumania (since deceased) to execute any refugees who have succeeded in escaping from Hungary into Rumania.

B. Without the strong representations of Ambassador Steinhardt, the War Refugee Board would not have been able to succeed in its operations in bringing 2672 persons who arrived in Istanbul by sea from Rumania during the period of January-August, 1944. These refugees arrived without Turkish transit visas. Such visas were issued to them upon their arrival, enabling them to continue their emigration without delay to Palestine. Part of the arrangement made by the Ambassador with the Turkish Ministry of Communications resulted in the provision of special trains to transport these refugees from Istanbul to the Syrian border.

C. In the instance of the Mefkura disaster, the Turkish Foreign Office instructed the Turkish Red Crescent to care for the safe arrival of the Mefkura survivors and the HUNEB passengers, who were permitted to proceed overland from Igneada to Istanbul under Foreign Office and Red Crescent auspices and protection. In view of the apparent dangers lurking in the Black Sea, it was essential that the passengers of the
were not exposed to further dangers of sea transport, and were provided with the means for their removal to Istanbul by land.

D. Preliminary steps were taken to secure permission to dispatch Turkish passenger vessels to Constanza for the evacuation of refugees from Rumania. The change in the political scene during early August, especially the Turkish-German diplomatic break, brought this initiative to a halt.


A. Jewish population in Bulgaria. There are about 45,000 Jews in Bulgaria. About 12,000 to 14,000 Jews have been deported, mostly from Thrace and Macedonia.

B. The exchange of Jewish Refugees for German Nationals. On July 6, 1944 an exchange of 115 Germans for 283 Jewish refugees took place in Istanbul, under the auspices of the Turkish Red Crescent. The 283 Jewish refugees were chosen by the Gestapo from a list submitted by the Jewish Agency. We are informed that there are three to four thousand such exchange certificates still outstanding.

C. Rescue by land from Bulgaria. 408 persons, including 46 children under the children's scheme, entered Turkey from Bulgaria during the first six months of 1944. The Turkish Foreign Office, at the intervention of the British and American embassies, agreed to admit all refugees to enter Turkey in transit to Palestine.

D. Several informal conferences were arranged through Simond of the International Red Cross with Monsieur Balabanoff, Bulgarian Minister to Ankara. The apparent desire of the Bulgarian (Bagryanov) Government to win the good-will of the American people at that time and the obvious impediments in
the way of sea-transport of Jewish refugees from Bulgaria, suggested the possibility of saving the Jewish population within Bulgaria, instead of continuing the sporadic efforts to bring out a relatively few victims.

With the aid of Ambassador Steinhardt, Balabanoff was pressed during these conversations and through the intervention of other intermediaries to the elimination of the Bulgarian anti-Jewish laws and the immediate, complete reinstatement of the Bulgarian Jewish population to its former rights and liberties. These views were placed before the Bagryanov Government. Although it was reported at one time, through most reliable source, that this question would be considered secondary to the major ones under discussion, at the special convocation of Parliament on August 17 we succeeded in having the question included on the agenda. On August 28, the famed Murenberg Anti-Jewish laws were formally withdrawn. This constituted the first revocation of anti-Jewish legislation by any Axis country or satellite, since the nefarious campaigns preceding and following the war.

During the conversations above-mentioned, a statement in writing was secured from Balabanoff, setting forth that the Bagryanov Government was categorically opposed to the anti-Jewish activities of the preceding Bulgarian governments, and promising that steps would be taken to annul the anti-Jewish laws at the first opportunity. Permission to publish this statement was also later secured from Balabanoff.

E. The steps in principle taken by the Bagryanov Government in connection with the reinstatement of the Jewish Bulgarian population were implemented and enforced by the succeeding
Bulgarian Governments. On September 22 the present Georgieff Government issued the statement quoted below, in the radio and press:

"(1). The Bulgarian Government takes a positive attitude regarding the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine.

"(2). The Bulgarian Government has no objection and will make no difficulties for those Jews who wish to emigrate to Palestine. Regarding them as Bulgarian citizens who enjoy full rights, the Government will require of them merely that they comply with all laws or regulations obligatory for all citizens of the country.

"(3). The Government has annulled all exclusive laws of anti-Jewish character. Such an exclusive law was that establishing a surtax to the extent of 10 to 25 per cent of the value of all Jewish property. This tax, being the result of a vicious law, was discriminatory against the Jews. The excess amount will now be returned, but because of Bulgaria's difficult financial situation, such amount will be transferred into a state loan of definite maturity.

"(4). The Jews now enjoy full equality of rights, and live under the same conditions and in freedom as do other Bulgarian nationals.

"The following procedure will be applied to the property falsely sold and confiscated:

"Property, firm rights, and other assets still owned by the State will be returned to the Jews. There will remain to be settled the question of assets about which legal obligations have arisen between the State and private interest, that is, where property or firm rights have been transferred to third parties, or where other obligatory relations have been
created during the course of the last few years. The solution of this problem is a question of time. The Government will find the means to solve it in such fashion as not to disturb the traditional friendship and mutual understanding between Bulgarians and Jews. The Government is being assisted in this matter by Jewish people who have confidence in it. The Government will solve the problem in accordance with national relations between a democratic State and its citizens.

"In cases where fictitious property transfers have been made by Jews to Bulgarians, such property will be automatically returned to its lawful owner. In cases of fraudulent transfers, the public authorities will make investigations and will proceed in favor of the injured party."

F. On August 23, agreement and permission were secured for the Bulgarian vessels *Vita* and *Pirin* to make several voyages to carry refugees from Bulgaria to Istanbul. The realization of this scheme was interrupted by political events in the Balkans. Ultimately, the *Vita* was sunk, reportedly on August 24, while en route from Balchik, Bulgaria, to Burgas, to embark passengers at the latter port. The voyage of the *Pirin* is now uncertain. Thus far, all emigration from Bulgaria has taken place via railroad.

5. Hungary.

A. A flow of refugee emigration from Hungary gave promise of fulfillment as a result of the pronouncement of Regent Borthy on July 18, 1944. It stated that Jewish people in certain categories and under certain limiting conditions were to be permitted to emigrate to Palestine, Sweden, and elsewhere. The Board assisted the Swiss Legation in Ankara in the
arrangement for 2200 people to have all of their documents put in order for emigration to Palestine. Transit through Rumania and Turkey had previously been arranged for them by the American embassy. Bulgarian transit visas were also in the process of obtaining. The Rumanian Government, through Cretzianu, had agreed, in principle, at our request, to permit the Hungarian refugees to remain in Rumania for a brief period, until transportation could be arranged. Meanwhile, investigations were made as to the feasibility of transporting the refugees from Budapest via Bulgaria to Istanbul (Transylvania had become a scene of Russian military operations). As result of Nazi interference none of the Hungarian refugees to date have been permitted to leave by this route.

B. Through Simond's intervention, an informal and confidential interview was held with Baron Thierry, Counselor of the Hungarian Embassy in Ankara. A broadening of the categories of Hungarian Jewish people who might be permitted to leave Hungary was sought. Baron Thierry informed me at that time (August 8) that it would be advisable, before requesting further concessions, to determine whether the first steps contained in the decree could succeed. He expressed some skepticism regarding the practicability of RegentsForathy's plan.

C. A small but steady stream of Jewish emigration had been taking place clandestinely from Hungary into Rumania. This required the development of complicated but secure underground agencies. It is estimated that 3500 to 4000 persons entered Rumania in this manner. Several hundred of them have already reached Palestine, via the Turkish boats sailing from Constanza. The Rumanian authorities, though aware of this movement, did not interfere with it.

There has been a sporadic movement, which we have encouraged, of refugees from Greece to Turkey by sea. This has taken place on a more or less informal basis, as opportunity afforded. Nevertheless, since October, 1943 approximately 900 Greek refugees have entered Turkey in this manner, and with the aid of the Turkish authorities have been expedited to Palestine. Inquiry disclosed that this movement from Greece might be accelerated and augmented if the Turkish authorities would be willing to designate a special base from which refugee rescue operations might be specifically undertaken. At our request, the Embassy discussed the matter with the Turkish Foreign Office, which agreed to issue the necessary instructions. With this assurance, inquiry into the practicability of establishing a base was made by Kotski at Izmir. Informed opinion there was that the establishment of a special base in Turkey at this time to direct the evacuation of refugees from Greece is not feasible because of indications of early evacuation of Greece by the Germans.

7. Turkey.

Reference has been made previously to the cooperation of the Turkish Foreign Office in issuing Turkish transit visas to refugees who entered the country by sea. A number of other proposals were made to the Turkish Foreign Office by the American Embassy, the British Embassy, and both Embassies jointly, in which the cooperation and assistance of the Foreign Office was requested for the purpose of expanding rescue activities from Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. In order to consolidate in an overall agreement the various understandings with the Foreign Office, it was agreed that the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs would issue Turkish transit visas to any number of Jews who might apply for them at the Turkish Consulate in Budapest, who were in possession of any one of four different documents, as enumerated in the agreement. Similar instructions were to be sent to the Turkish Consulates in Constanza and Burgas, authorizing them to issue up to 400 visas between them every ten days to applicants, bearers of similar documents. At first, the Turkish Foreign Office desired to limit entry into Turkey from Rumania and Bulgaria to persons arriving by ship, but this was subsequently amended to include rail transportation, until such time as it could be demonstrated that voyages by sea could be made with some degree of regularity. The Foreign Office also undertook to request the Ministry of the Interior to admit into Turkey without delay and without reference to Ankara any persons arriving at Turkey's land borders without Turkish visas, provided such persons were in possession of one of the four types of documents referred to above.

This broad concession on the part of the Turkish Foreign Office can be attributed also to a desire on the part of the Turkish authorities to cooperate with the United States Government program in the work under the aegis of the War Refugee Board and to the confidence in which it held Ambassador Steinhardt.

b. United States Visa Instructions.

Instructions have been received by the American Consulate General in Istanbul, as a result of War Refugee Board discussions with the State Department, authorizing the issuance of United States visas for which advisory approval had been
granted subsequent to July 1, 1941, or the renewal of visas actually issued since that date, but which have expired. These instructions applied to visa applicants in Axis or Axis-dominated countries, and were to be issued under certain circumstances and conditions. They were subsequently amended to include specified close relatives of American citizens or of aliens legally admitted into the United States. The Turkish Foreign Office has been informed thereof, in connection with the issuance of Turkish transit visas, and such prospective visa-holders have been included among the categories of persons to whom the Foreign Office instructions, relative to the issuance of Turkish transit visas referred to above, apply. Developments in the Balkans, up to the present time, have precluded any substantial activity to implement the intent of the State Department's instructions.
Observations

The rapid and radical political and military changes in the Balkans since the capitulation of the Romanian Government on August 23, 1944 has fundamentally altered the possibilities of rescue through Turkey. It was hoped, when Rumania and Bulgaria became "liberated areas", that access to these countries would be available without too much delay, and that information regarding the precise status of the victimized populations of their own countries, and those who had immigrated to them, would be available. For reasons well justified such has not been the case.

Rumania has become a field of military operations. At the present writing, sporadic fighting is continuing in Transylvania, which promises to become a major battle-line of the Russians. For the present, this has sealed up the possibilities of emigration from Hungary through Rumania. No information has been forthcoming from Rumania, except an occasional letter from Zissau, representing the Jewish Agency, and Filderman, of the Joint Distribution Committee. Filderman has urgently requested basic supplies for an impoverished Jewish population. Since the Board's definition of our activities precludes relief work, we have not pursued any efforts in this direction, although Ambassador Steinhardt is aiding, at the approved time, the efforts of Passman, the representative of the Joint Distribution Committee, to enter Rumania and Bulgaria for the purpose of surveying the situation for the purpose of introducing relief operations.
In Bulgaria, a few newspaper correspondents and informal representatives of Palestine agencies succeeded in arriving in Sofia. They reported a city, formerly populated by 300,000 people, reduced to a skeleton of some 45,000. The promise of the Bagryanov Government to the embassy and the war refugee board to revoke the anti-Jewish laws was kept by the Georgieff Government. In addition, the rights and properties of the Jewish population are being restored as rapidly as possible, under fairly chaotic conditions.

Under the above circumstances, it appears at this writing that the major program of the war refugee board, operating through Turkey, is concluding. There remains, in my opinion, further explorations in Bulgaria, Rumania and also Hungary when the latter is liberated. The possibility of any further operations from Turkey, however, are dependent on the newly oriented military and political situation, wherein Russia appears to be playing a dominant role, and in which our efforts must be guided entirely by the representation of missions in Bulgaria and Rumania and, it is hoped, eventually Hungary.

Conclusions.

As observed in my two previous reports, the establishment of the war refugee board and the dispatch of representatives to Turkey working with the sympathetic and resourceful aid of Ambassador Steinhardt resulted in the rescue of thousands of refugees who were admitted into Palestine. It is doubtful if these refugees would have been permitted to enter Turkey
and proceed to Palestine without the operations of the
Ambassador and the Board representatives on the scene in
Turkey. It bears repetition that it is regrettable that
the Board, which has demonstrated its vitality and the
success of its operations, was not created a year or two ago.
There is no doubt from the evidence at hand that additional
thousands of refugees could have been saved.

It is evident that the mere existence of the Board and
its representatives in Turkey acted as a catalytic agent in
spurring the morale of the destitute and terrorized citizens
in the Balkans, who had reached a low ebb of existence. It
is consistently reported by numbers of refugees who had
come through Turkey that the existence of the Board and the
work by the embassy in Turkey was known throughout the Balkans,
and that it provided for the victims a ray of hope which
resulted in lifting their own morale and an eleventh-hour
self-sustaining effort on their own part. In retrospect, and
as a precedent, the establishment of the War Refugee Board
can be viewed as a sharp and vitalizing instrument for rescue
in the face of the mechanisms brought to bear in warfare
against non-participating, innocent populations.

The example is cited of the abandonment of the disease-
ridden Transnistrian camp, through the initiative of the Board
with Cretzianu, in March, 1944. Several thousand of the
children released from this camp have passed through Turkey
into Palestine.
The final phase of the Board's program in establishing a supplementary program of saving the populations within their own country, instead of attempting the sporadic rescue of small groups during the closing days of the war should also be emphasized. While there is reason to believe that the anti-Jewish laws in Bulgaria, for example, would have been revoked at some stage in the liberation of these countries after their capitulation, it is stated on high authority from the Bulgarians themselves that the Jewish question was considered an incidental one, and was to be treated at a convenient later hour. It is believed that every day in which the 45,000 reinstated Bulgarian Jewish citizens were given back their freedom is a day won for freedom.

Finally, as a blue-print for peace, the precedent established by Bulgaria in making its first bold and dramatic steps in the direction of the freeing of the first victims of the war, the Jewish population, is one that may not be lost in the fall of the other satellites, and in Germany itself.

Respectfully submitted,

Ira A. Hirschmann
Attache
Istanbul, 3rd September 1964.

Mr. Dr. Sirachmann,
Special Situation
Mr. Refugee Board
Washington.

Dear Mr. Sirachmann,

At today's meeting of the Executive Working Committee we learned with mixed feelings of your decision to leave for Washington and report and consult with your Board on further activity and future plans in the light of the changed situation. True, the military and political field changed, one or the other country are out of the war; you were witness to the culmination of a task, terminated in the strict sense of rescue, with the restoration of all rights to the oppressed in Bulgaria.

The tenseness of the situation which moved those horrified by the inhuman treatment of helpless victims, to its very depths; which prompted the creation of the war refugee board for an all out effort to rescue, where there is still a spark of hope of success; this tenseness which confronted you, when you first faced the task in being gradually dissipated, but grim reality still prevails.

At the meeting today, the last before your departure, some of us took occasion, each from his own point of view, to express the need and to impress upon you the urgency of exploring all ways for the full realization of rescue of broken and shattered lives, of hopeless people, of nameless orphans, still in concentration camps, still exposed to the threat of deportation. Clearly the
rescue or those - who are threatened with their lives is, in a sense, 

outstanding in the effort of rescue directed from and through 

Turkey to Palestine, however, and in its complexity by its very nature, 

made more complex by the multitude of organizations engaged in the work, 

by limited means or physical facilities, was the unequivocal definition 

of the war refugee board of rescue to apply to all who are in danger, 

thus dissipating fears and doubts. 

It led to another outstanding achievement, in that it produced 

the necessary unification and coordination of the effort. This principle 

must be applied in the interim period between rescue from destruction, 

and the reconstruction of lives, physically and morally broken down, and 

the ultimate return to . . . .

Since the terms of references of the J.R.B. do not correspond 

any longer to the new situation, does it mean that the tasks of the 

board have already been fulfilled and the reasons for its existence ex-

hausted?

In Romania, not all anti-Jewish laws have, as yet, been 

abolished. The waiting-rooms of philanthropic institutions there are 

now, more than ever, crowded with Jewish people, whose existence had 

been ruined and who are left with no other alternative than living on 

charity. Uprooted refugees from Bucovina and other former Romanian 

provinces are queuing at the doors of Palestine Emigration offices throughout 

Romania. Refugees from Hungary and Poland are loitering everywhere, 

pale and hungry, haunted from street to street and possessed by the con-

stant fear of being stopped and asked for a passport they do not possess and 

for an address they do not have. Thousands of orphan-children from former 

Transnistria and other starvation camps are wandering about, nameless, 

abandoned and driven at anything by the instinct of subsisting at any 

price, changing from one way of dog-life to another.

Now as to Bulgaria. In fact, what good has it done to the 

Jews there that all rights have been, de jure, restored to them?
The 25,000 Jews who in May 1943 have been expelled from Sofia and scattered over 25 places of concentration, how will they be able to recover their homes, businesses and means of existence, merely on the basis and strength of the government’s order that everything plundered, expropriated or pawned in public auction during the last two years, can be realized without further formalities. Laws of this kind, by means of which a government that perhaps actually has no funds is trying to shirk from the responsibility and task of rebuilding the broken Jewish economic life, could not they perhaps bring about a new hatred and renewed chicanery between Jews, claiming their property back on one hand and Bulgarians, who have to return it, on the other? Information received from reliable representatives in Bulgaria, depicts the terrible condition prevailing there among the returning Jews, with no roofs over their heads, with no means to subsist on, without the slightest idea as to how to start again earning some bread for one’s wife and children, nor as to wherefrom to obtain some clothing to shield them from cold, right now on the threshold of winter – this is how most Bulgarian Jews stand now, while the rest of the country is jubilant with joy over the liberation from tyranny. True, the government is promising, sincerely and in good faith, to include the Jews into the general reconstruction schemes now under consideration. THE JEWS, HOWEVER, CANNOT AFFORD TO TELL. To them this is no question of improving one’s standard of living, as it perhaps is to most Bulgarians; it is a question of how to preserve the lives and health of thousands and thousands of hungry people.

Then there is still the news from Hungary. A report dated Sep.4, from the representative of the Jewish Agency in Budapest to the representative of the International Red Cross states: “Out of 800,000 Jews there are only 200,000 left. The major part of these are kept in refugee-camps and forced labor camps. Starvation, cold and despair prevail in all these camps, no matter
to which of the two types any of them belong. Moreover, the uncertainty and the permanent fear of deportation that may come along at any moment, drives people crazy. Waiting for rescue to come, these unfortunate human beings have constantly in their mind the picture of what has happened on previous occasions, when evacuation was hoped for, but never came true." The report further says: " an agreement has been concluded between Hungarian and the German authorities under which even the remaining Jews of Budapest are to be transferred to concentration camps, probably to make them easier accessible to the Hungarians. Hundreds of Jews are still trying to make the dangerous escape to Romania or Yugoslavia. Are they to be left in the lurch now? Is there really no salvation for these Jews, who, on Sep. 4th, we definitely knew, were still alive? There is no need for us to go on drawing the sad picture of the still raging catastrophe, the very catastrophe which President Roosevelt wanted to avert or at least minimize by creating the U.N.R.R.A. and by appointing you a special attaché. There is still much that can be done and has to be done. Specifically the following immediate measures should be considered:

1. **Hungary**: The United Nations should immediately mobilize all means of pressure in their power, so that to compel the Hungarian government to put a definite stop to the deportations. This can be obtained by threatening the Hungarian government with effective sanctions;

2. The Swiss and neutral government should be requested that, together with the International Red Cross, they create a control commission to be sent out to Hungary to examine the situation and take steps that no further deportations take place.

It is surmised that the Hungarian and German Governments which, so far, have proved reluctant to any control of such kind, would no longer venture to oppose it if the demand for such a control is accompanied by the threat that the Red Cross would sever relations with Hungary and
Germany and thus leave German and Hungarian interests, citizens, and war refugees, throughout the Allied world no longer protected.

3. Romania: The Romanian Government should be urgently required finally and completely to abolish all remnants of anti-Jewish legislation.

4. The Governments in Romania and Bulgaria in general will be urged to facilitate as far as possible the emigration of Jews willing to emigrate from those countries.

As an immediate and urgent measure, the United Nations will aid and facilitate the evacuation by competent bodies of refugees from other countries now living in Romania and Bulgaria, as well as of the unfortunate orphan-children from Transylvania.

To attain all this the following are necessary:

a) Pressure on the respective States in order to make the exit possible;
b) the release of some of the now seized boats, so that they serve for the transportation of refugees;
c) the approval of the Allied Occupation Authorities in Romania and Bulgaria of the emigration of the people in question.

We ask you, dear Mr. Hirschmann, to make yourself the interpreter of the consequences deriving from these views to President Roosevelt, to the Car refugee Board, and to the American public opinion. We trust that you will do it with the same energy, enthusiasm and conviction, that have characterised all your activity here in Istanbul and to which, to a very large extent, we owe the fact that it was possible to break through the cold and heartless wall, that had been surrounding the martyred remnants still alive and that thousands of them have been able to find their salvation in Palestine.

With all good wishes
respectfully yours

[Signature]

P.S. Requesting further points,
_view_expression_in_Upper

[Signature]
An edited copy will be forwarded to you in Washington.
September 16, 1944

Mr. John P. Peble
Executive Director
Var Refugee BOARD
Treasury Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear John:

I am enclosing a letter which I brought back for you from Iran.

Although I did not stay in Istanbul as long as I had originally intended, I did stay three weeks and spent a considerable amount of time with Irn, and would be only too happy to tell you anything that you might like to know about his problems.

I expect to be in Washington some time this week and will call you.

With my kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Irving H. Sherman
Dear John:

I am seizing the opportunity of Sherman's return to write you personally, although by the time this letter reaches you the contents will probably be obsolete in view of the rapidly changing situation in the Balkans. Under separate cover I have forwarded to you my report covering rather fully the work of the Board's representatives in Turkey from June 18 to August 19, 1944. Since then Rumania has withdrawn, and as I write today Bulgaria is on the edge. The situation in Hungary still calls for urgent action. Taking each of the countries separately, the situation, as it appears from here today, is as follows:

1. Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Government, in its broadcasts and announcements has repeatedly referred to the question of the reinstatement of the Jews. We have been informed today, and as telegraphed to you, that the anti-Jewish laws have been completely wiped out by decree. This is extremely gratifying, as we had set our hearts on this as part of the steps to be taken by the Bulgarian Government at the first possible moment. The fact that it has done so, even before it is able to achieve an armistice, is an indication of its concrete desire to satisfy the urgent request of the War Refugee Board, and the record can so state.

I believe, therefore, that our program designed to (a) concern ourselves with the rescue of the 45,000 Jews from within the country instead of the trickle from without seems to have been sound; (b) our insistence upon the complete revocation of the nefarious anti-Jewish laws seems to have been justified. Putting the 45,000 people back on their feet is in itself desirable, of course, but I know that you will agree with the larger aspect, namely, establishing a precedent and a blueprint for the return of the rights and self-sustaining dignity of human beings in advance of the Governments' capitulation. I appreciate the Board's concurrence in my program to this effect, which has been confirmed by Ambassador Steinhardt on his return in the last few days.
In the meanwhile we have determined not to relax in our program of evacuating Bulgarian Jews and children who wish for emergency reasons voluntarily to depart. As soon as the circumstances permit, it is my intention to go to Bulgaria or to send Katzki with a view of getting a first-hand picture of the situation as it relates to our program. We are working closely with Passman of the JDC and wish to assist him also in introducing an emergency relief program there. Reports reaching us indicate that the 45,000 Jewish citizens are in a rather precarious state, and notwithstanding the impending withdrawal of the restrictions against them, experience has taught that it will be some time before the rights, economic possibilities and mechanisms for the return to normal life will be possible. We hope to expedite this within the framework of our jurisdiction.

2. Rumania

We have very little information of any authenticity or clarity at this writing. Our view is not to press, in any unusual way, the Rumanian citizens to evacuate, especially since all concentration camps and restrictions (as reported to me by Cretzianu) seem to have been abolished by the new Government, and we may expect that, with the United Nations in control, the pressures which compelled the Jews in Rumania to emigrate will be relieved. There are, however, in Rumania Poles, Slovaks, Hungarians, etc., who should probably be assisted in their exodus, and we expect to introduce measures to locate these people and assist them. Rumania still offers, in our opinion, a real possibility for aid to the blighted Hungarians. Although fighting is proceeding in Transylvania, which was the route through which refugees travelled clandestinely from Hungary to Rumania, we are not excluding the possibility of finding some means of continuing and possibly accelerating this movement. It will, of course, have a much better chance of succeeding if we can get somebody into Rumania, and we plan to do so at our first opportunity. I discussed this today with Ambassador Steinhardt.

I am interpreting the function of the Board's representation in Turkey as being not terminated until every possibility for rescue and salvage through the Balkans has been explored and activated. With the opening of the two countries now we should enter them and exploit their possibilities until the problem seems reached. If the Board does not renew in this I should appreciate hearing from you. It may be necessary
to secure your help with the State Department or the military authorities in authorizing us to move into one or both of these countries. I do not exclude the possibility of some resistance in this effort. At that time we shall telegraph you so that you may take the appropriate steps in Washington, provided that you agree.

The question of transportation from Rumania has become complicated since the turn in events. With the principal ports in the hands of the Russians it is not clear at this moment whether a real transport by sea will be possible. There were four boats available in Rumania—Smyrne (Greek), Alba Julia (Rumanian), Salahaldin (Turkish) and Milka (Bulgarian). We are without information as to whether any of these or any other boats may now leave Rumania. War conditions likewise have snarled up railroad traffic.

3. Hungary

Hungarian reports reaching us today indicate that the Germans are resorting to extraordinary pressure to exact the last pound of flesh. What I fear at this writing is the last-minute convulsions of the Nazis which might exert a steel-like grip on the victims and take an eleventh-hour toll. We shall do whatever is within our means and possibilities from Istanbul, but such information as we have indicates that the Germans are unlikely to permit the evacuation of Jews from Hungary via the Balkans to Palestine. We had made arrangements for transit from Hungary via Rumania and the Black Sea, should the Hungarian Jews be able to leave, but the possibility of this is now doubtful. Meanwhile we are exploring other possibilities.

4. Greece

I telegraphed you today on the number of refugees who had been rescued from the Greek Islands into Turkey in the last several months. We have been working on the Greek rescue program for several months here but I did not report to you until it was possible to open a new base under the Board's auspices. The "Kayaks" had virtually ceased operating due to the absence of a base in Turkey, and we have been working with the O.S.S. and the Turkish authorities to secure an extra base exclusively for our rescue operations. It seems that this has finally come through, and we are now in a position to undertake this operation in that area from a base under our control, provided it seems feasible, in order to snatch as many people out of Greece as possible at this moment. You will undoubtedly have heard from me by telegraph regarding this by the time this letter reaches you.
As I wrote in my report to you, I have had an especially smooth working group with which to operate. The Embassy has been completely cooperative. Ambassador Steinhardt's return is welcome. I only regret that we haven't been able to bring more victims out of the Balkans, but I believe I can say with confidence and candor that, looking back, I cannot see any other device that might have been used from here to have increased the flow. In fact, if anything, I may have overstepped my bounds somewhat. Judging from one of the telegrams, the State Department was somewhat critical of my pressure on the Bulgarian Government, and Ambassador Steinhardt has intimated that he had received the same impression from the State Department. I hope that the Board was in no way embarrassed by my conversations, and I can see no reason for regret on my part for the steps which I undertook with the enemy. On the contrary.

As I see the picture here now (and it changes radically from day to day) I personally should be operating here from four to six weeks longer, although I shall not leave until I consider my part of the direction in the work completed. When I do request approval for my return, you may be assured that I have determined from all the aspects of the program as seen from this part of the world that my work is completed. This, however, should not preclude the continuance of it in certain phases by Katzki and the secretaries. He is an exceptionally able fellow. Sherman, coming along at the time he did, was helpful with advice and certain suggestions.

Again let me thank you and your associates for the support and the encouragement you gave me, which I appreciate very much.

With kind personal regards,

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attache

John W. Fehle, Esquire
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington, D.C.
THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN EMBASSY
Istanbul, September 16, 1964

Dear John:

I am enclosing a memorandum from Mr. Matzki covering his investigation at İzmir for the purpose of inquiring the possibilities of opening an independent American base under the auspices of the UN Refugee Board for the transportation of additional refugees from Greece to Turkey.

Cordially yours,

L. H. Hirschmann
Special Attaché

cc: Mr. J. W. Pohl, Executive Director
UN Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington, D.C.

Enclosure

Kind regards to all.
MEMORANDUM
From Mr. Katzki to Mr. Hirschmann

Pursuant to your instructions, on September 9, 1944 I proceeded to Izmir to investigate on the spot the feasibility of establishing an independent rescue service under our auspices to transport refugees from Greece to Turkey. (Mr. Katzki, representative of the Palestine Rescue Committee, accompanied me.)

I had previously been informed that, following representations made by the American embassy at Ankara at the request of the Greek refugee issue, instructions had been sent from Ankara via the Turkish consul in Izmir to the latter's agent in Izmir authorizing the establishment of an independent base on the Turkish coast to be used exclusively for rescue operations for Greek refugees. We had also been informed that the evacuation of refugees from Greece had been taking place under independent auspices, and the purpose of the investigation was to determine whether or not such movement could be accelerated and increased through the establishment of a special service for that purpose.

Upon our arrival at Izmir, inquiry was made of the Turkish consul, and we were informed that no instructions had been received from Ankara authorizing the opening of a base. However, the consul had been instructed by Ankara at an earlier time (he did not have the exact date) to grant all facilities to refugees coming by sea to the Turkish coast from Greece, by reiterating from placing any obstacles before their disembarkation on Turkish territory. We were informed, and experience seems to bear this out, that the local police were proceeding according to this instruction, and they stated that they would continue to permit the entry into Turkish territory of all refugees from Greece coming by sea. (Approximately 500 refugees from Greece, according to our information, have already arrived in Turkey.)
in this manner.) In the opinion of the police, however, it is too late now to establish a base, for in their opinion the need thereby will shortly be obvious, as a result of recent developments in Greece. This refers to the evacuation by the German military of Crete, which is now taking place, and which, one may expect, will shortly take place on the Greek mainland. However, if anyone should instruct the police to make a base available, they of course would do so.

I spoke with Dr. Ellis A. Bremner, the leader in charge of the International Osteopathic in Cairo, I discussed our plan with him, in his opinion, and the immediate steps have been taken. At the present time, in his opinion, which reflects information which he has received from various sources, the need for a base might be expected to be eliminated within a matter of weeks.

I conferred with Miss Dorothy Cox, who has represented the Greek Welfare Association in Cairo. I understand, for almost two years, she has followed up the Greek refugee movement closely, and has personally spoken with a great number of refugees who have come from that country. Although she naturally is vitally interested in the welfare and fate of Greek people, her opinion likewise was that it probably is too late to have a base under the refugee Board auspices at this time.

I also spoke with the S.C. Representative in Cairo. He informed us that he had received instructions from Washington to assist the War Refugee Board in whatever way he can, by advising it and lending such guidance as may be feasible in view of his other responsibilities, in preparing a base for Greek refugees. This representative was most helpful in advising us regarding the basic steps which would have to be taken in terms of initiation, preparation, and operation of a base.
He likewise was of the opinion that the time had passed when independent operations by the War Refugees Board would have been urgent and useful. That is not to say that every effort should not be made to evacuate refugees at this time, but considering the timing between the initial steps for preparing the base and the time when refugees might be expected as the result of its operations, the situation in Greece might well be clarified.

Further inquiry was made in other channels in an informal manner regarding the possibility of setting a base, staffing it, supplying it, etc., etc. Such inquiry indicated that, given sufficient time, a base could be set up in operation. However, there was no way for determining in advance how long this period might be.

In view of the foregoing opinions and other expressions of opinion which had been received in Istanbul from informed persons, it could not be said that no further steps for establishing a base should be taken at this time, especially since the Turkish Secret Police apparently had issued no instructions authorizing it. Of course the matter again through Ankara would proceed, consume still more time, and we have before us the opinion of the legal representative in Izmir of the Turkish Secret Police, who, one may assume, would express himself in the same manner should Ankara request his views on the subject.

Herbert Katzki

K/B
Dear John:

The Istanbul newspapers of today carried an item with a Washington date-line, which referred to a press release issued by Mr. Patrick Malin on the subject of the post-war plans of the Intergovernmental Committee in behalf of displaced populations in Europe. Included in this statement was the information that there were between one and two million persons who may not be able or willing to return to their countries of origin, and for whom, in consequence, other arrangements for permanent settlement will have to be made.

Having been rather close to the scene of refugee activity, and having participated in operations connected with it in the Balkans, I naturally have a deep-seated interest in what will happen here after the war.

When the emergency rescue phase of the refugee job ceases, after the war, it will not be possible for me to shut off my emotional interest in this humanitarian problem, and even after I return to my business I do not intend to lose interest in what is happening in this field.

I am taking this occasion to write to you on a matter in this connection which has been disturbing me for some time. Events in the Balkans appear rapidly to be coming to a conclusion, and one may hope that in the not-too-distant future problems of displaced persons in this area will shift from the stage of academic discussion and planning to that of concrete work. While I am not fully informed of what the Intergovernmental Committee has been doing or the plans it is making, it appears to me to be incomprehensible that at this stage of affairs that the Intergovernmental Committee is without its own permanent representative in Istanbul, familiarizing himself with Balkan conditions in terms of the task of the Committee, collecting information, and performing such preliminary and detailed duties as might now be possible in order that no time will be lost when it is able and necessary to function in this region. Perhaps such delegate is already here, but if that is so I certainly do not know about it.

In view of the close relationships which exist between the War Refugee Board and the Intergovernmental Committee, I feel that I should bring this to your attention. I am sure that the matter is under consideration, not only for the Balkans but for other areas as well. Nevertheless, for the sake of our common cause, I thought that you would be interested in the views of someone at this point adjacent to the Balkans.

With warm personal regards,

[Signature]

J. W. Fehle, Esquire
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington, D. C.
Ankara, September 11, 1944

No. 783

Subject: Regarding report from Dr. Ira A. Hirschmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Fehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith a report from Dr. Ira A. Hirschmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Fehle, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, Washington, regarding efforts which are being made by Dr. Hirschmann and the Embassy to rescue oppressed minorities from Axis-occupied Europe.

Respectfully yours,

Enclosure:

Report as described.

1 pc

File No. 340.1

To the Department in original and hectograph.
Dear Mr. Noble:

I am enclosing herewith my preliminary report covering the activities of the Board's progress in Turkey from June 10 to August 12, 1944. In order to make for easier reading I have divided this, as in my previous report, into two major sections:

(1) Covering the background and chronological developments of our work,

(2) Conclusions, observations and recommendations.

Political events are moving with such rapidity in the Middle East and the Balkans that many of the situations referred to in the report may have undergone considerable change by the time this reaches you. It is hoped that the report will serve, however, as a record of the steps taken by me and my associates here in our work during the period stated above.

In addition to the references made in the final pages of the report to Mr. Potocki and the two secretaries assigned to us in Turkey, I wish to acknowledge here again the loyal and invaluable efforts of Mr. Potocki who has compiled considerable data in the report, and whose efforts have been immeasurably helpful.

A subsequent report will be mailed to you in due course.

May I again offer my hearty thanks to you, the Board, and your associates for the full support which you have accorded me, without which I could not have functioned.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) L. A. REILCHMANN
Special Attaché

John W. Noble, Executive Director
Refugee Board
Department of State
Washington, D.C.
INDEX

Part I. Background and chronological development

1. Fuel brandt .................................................. 1
2. Organizational chaos in Istanbul.
   A. Situation found here upon my arrival.............. 2
   B. Steps taken to coordinate activities
      of organizations........................................ 3
3. Romania
   A. Discussions with Cretzianu......................... 4
   B. Rescue by sea
      1. General situation................................. 5
      2. The Turkish boat................................. 7
         (a) The SS Knebel ................................ 7
         (b) The SS Doring, Bulbul, and Herenda........ 10
   3. Romanian ships............................... 11
   4. Other Turkish ships in
      contemplation........................................ 11
4. Bulgaria
   A. Jewish population in Bulgaria.................... 12
   B. Exchange of Jewish refugees for German
      nationals.............................................. 13
   C. Rescue by land from Bulgaria.................... 13
   D. Rescue by sea........................................ 15
5. Hungary
   A. Clandestine movement............................... 16
   B. Other methods of rescue.......................... 18
   C. Hungarian movement through Romania............ 18
   D. The Catholic Church................................ 19
6. Greece....................................................... 20
Part II. Conclusions, Observations and Recommendations

1. Representatives of Organizations
2. The Three Phases
3. Acknowledgements
4. Future Operations
PART I

BACKGROUND AND CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT
Istanbul, Turkey
March 30, 1944.

Mr. John A. Steele, Executive Director
Office of the U.S. State Department

Dear Mr. Steele:

An unaided eye could not have foreseen the picture of the Turkish situation I received during a recent trip to Turkey. I am very grateful to you and the Turkish authorities for your help and cooperation.

As you are aware, I arrived in Istanbul on Sunday evening, June 15. On the following day, after a conference with Ambassador Steinhardt, I was informed that Turkey had been in consultation with various powers prior to my arrival in Turkey. For a number of reasons, it was necessary to leave Istanbul, and I was determined that I should return to Istanbul at once to explore further, and to investigate the matter relating to the situation in Turkey.

On June 17 I forwarded to you a copy of my report submitted to Ambassador Steinhardt, covering my observations and recommendations concerning the matters relating to Turkey.

I am pleased to learn that the Turkish authorities have accepted my recommendations and are taking action in the matter as indicated. Accordingly,

I have been working on the subject, Istanbul, and have concluded that the situation is stable. There is no need to take any further action in the matter, and I have acted accordingly.

I shall be sending a report on the subject.

I shall also include a summary of the joint distribution committee, as it is important to me that the city of Istanbul, which is the capital of Turkey, be given the necessary assistance concerning the so-called 'crisis' proposals, as a final

[Handwritten note]

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter 4/12/52
By R. H. Parks Date: SEP 18 1972
word, I deem it a matter of regret that Joel Brand
was urged and virtually obliged by the British
to depart from Turkey and not returned to his Jewish
principals and family in Turkey.

2. Organizational Shape in Istanbul.

Situation found here upon my arrival.

Upon my arrival in Ankara, Ambassador Steinhardt
informed me that, since my return to the United
States, a large number of representatives of
various organizations from the United States and
Europe had arrived in Turkey. In their zeal
to assist in the rescue of refugees representing
their own special constituents, and because of a
lack of familiarity with what had already been
undertaken and with conditions for such operations
in Turkey, a confused and chaotic situation was
developing. As a result, a disproportionate amount
of the Ambassador's time, and that of his already
hard-pressed staff, was being absorbed. The situation
had also created confusion for the office of the
result of the numerous disconnected approaches which
were being made by these individuals to the Turkish
Foreign Office. As reported to you by Ambassador
Steinhardt, the Ankara mission had been made by him with
the Secretary General of the Foreign Office, calling
for all of the rescue activities through the
special representative of the ARDA Board,
upon my return to Turkey.

On Monday, June 22, Ambassador Steinhardt
invited to his home two representatives of the various
organizations who had converged upon Turkey and who were
then in Ankara for a luncheon and a discussion of a
new project to synchronize the efforts involved in
the rescue work from Turkey. At this
luncheon there were present: Ambassador Steinhardt;
Robert Kelley, consul of America; Dr. Alfred
Schwartz; representing the ARDA Board;
Dr. Joseph Schwartz, president of the American
Joint Distribution Committee; and Rabbi
Moses, president of the Hebrew
University in Jerusalem, and Harry Vitas, both of
the Middle East advisory committee of the American
Joint Distribution Committee; Chaim Arlosoroff and
David
Schwartz, representatives of the Middle East
migration association; and Jacob Wriffig,
representative of the United Israel and the United
Zakah.

Ambassador Steinhardt pointed out the impossibility of
the efforts to achieve results on the competitive and disorganized basis until the
various organizations were attempting to function
in the urgent field of rescue. He recommended
that a general overall committee be organized to
consider
consider in matters relating to refugee work, the committee to consist of representatives of the interested countries in Europe, in addition, there are to be appointed executive sub-committees, to deal with immediate problems and to make decisions, where committees to be headed by the representatives of the various countries, be asked to form the executive sub-committees, to be headed by the representatives of the interested countries in Europe, and by representatives of the international committees and related activities, the meeting was unanimous and offered a practical solution.

Having secured unanimous approval to create the so-called executive committee, a committee consisting of the following persons: Stefan Mink, representing the Joint Distribution Committee, for the Jewish Agency, Moses Schindler, and E. Vinson. The first meeting of the committee was held in Paris on June 19, 1944, attended by the representatives of the various countries. The minutes of this meeting are attached (Exhibit 1) with one exception, meetings have been held regularly.

The presence of Mr. Tjemke, the chairman of the executive committee of the Jewish Agency and Mr. Joseph Schneider, the European director of the Joint Distribution Committee, and not only in matters of the objectives of their respective organizations, but also in matters of conflicting activities in which their organizations are involved, such as cooperative action for thehorn for rescue. They agreed to pool their organizations' resources and activities under the refugee committee's program. While certain differences in methods and objectives were bound to create some degree of divergence of view, some of which we have reported by telephone, it is fundamentally believed that this driving back of the enemy and cooperation has been established between the nations so that there exists a high degree of unity, with all countries giving full support to the joint program.
Exhibit 6 is a list of the organizations now engaged in relief, rescue, and relief activities in Syria, their representation in activities.

5. Report

5.1 Agreement with Syria. The results

Achieved from the talks about relations which had been

Established between Syria and the International Rescue Voluntary" had

Me, myself, on my previous visit to Turkey, led
to the resumption of some conversations at the

James of Albert Einstein of the International Rescue

Relays. In July, the contents of the

Letter were transmitted to you by telegraph and

Pouch. A cable from these conversations, as reported
to you, the further conviction that Syria's

Personality, in a humanitarian capacity; the

European, were endeavoring to limit, in a

Measures or, in any event, our government through

Their necessity in the request made on behalf of

The Syrian's rescue program.

Syria's agreement to permit refugees from

Hungary into the country. This agreement, however,

Syria, especially by the International Relief Voluntary,

Syria, is requested to have had a military effect.

In my second conference with Syria on August

5, he was urged for the government to permit the

Hungarian refugees to remain temporarily in Syria,

Where "Muras" could be established for them. This

Agreement was introduced in the countries of the

Europe, especially link-ups for the

Syrians, across four months ago. We are required

The Syrian government to permit the evacuation of

Any number of Syrian Jewish citizens to be to evade

Their persecutors, as were today as existing of the

Syrian government's jurisdiction for the territory

As a so-called temporary "safe haven" for refugees

From her neighbor, Hungary, Syria seized upon

The irony of the situation, choosing to interpret our

Request for so-called "temporary haven" in Syria

As an indication that we had consented Syria to have

Some time for refugees. Nor did I make any effort

to discourage him in this assertion, urging instead

That his government substantiate the new situation.

In terms of results,

Syria's allocation of the relief requests for information, reading, (a) the new

Organization sponsored by the government to deal with

Relief activities; (b) the transit of relief connected

Europe, (c) the relief being played by the American

Allied, relief, etc. On (d) the operation of the

Ralia, of the American Radio from Constantinople, I have

every
every reason to believe that he has also urged his government to make all feasible arrangements for the reception and temporary retention in Czecho-Slovakia of the Jewish refugees when they arrive. In this connection, I have reason to believe that the authorized Jewish organizations, by our direction, will provide the necessary food, clothing, funds, etc., for the refugees in Czecho-Slovakia, who are obliged to seek temporary haven there en route to Palestine.

It is hoped by us, the rescue of refugees from the Balkans by sea, which was accelerated in the months of March and April (see Exhibit B), materially decreased during the months of May and June. The facts leading to this situation are:

1. General situation. The branch of the Jewish Agency which had succeeded in chartering the "Sحيا," "Shalom," etc., and in laying the groundwork for the execution of this unauthorized operation, faced numerous problems connected with obtaining Hungarian passports and exit visas essential for transportation. On July 6, I reported that the additional obstacles which had arisen during the interval period to obstruct the departure of refugees from Czecho-Slovakia (see Exhibit C). After the earlier obstacles had been overcome, the final hurdle was taken through the efforts of "Bnei Torah," in conjunction with the Turkish Commercial Office, as a result of which the latter permitted the entry of any sea into Turkish territory with Turkish visas, and arranged for the immediate dispatch of the refugees by rail to Palestine. You are already familiar with the details and routine connected with this movement.

As an exception was the Seattle, another Bulgarian boat which made its trip under independent and different arrangements. In this instance, a group of ten families in Czecho-Slovakia, with ample funds, chartered the Galicia in Czecho-Slovakia. Enough for the trip to carry free or charge 170 of the children who had been released through the efforts of the "Car Refugite" Board from Czecho-Slovakia. Some of these families paid, as we are informed, 1.5 million to a million lei each. (Therefore it is in this connection that reports received by you concerning high prices paid for passage to Turkey by certain individuals) we are advised, however, that on all ships where people of means wish to travel, they are charged abnormally high fees by the local organizations in Czecho-Slovakia, which are employed to help secure the necessary funds to meet expenses in Czecho-Slovakia for passport and visa fees and other costs in connection with the sailing, especially in behalf of refugees who assembled in Czecho-Slovakia and were without funds. For your information, no refugees from Czecho-Slovakia, as distinguished from Czecho-Slovakian nationals, who have been transported by sea to Isaac, has been required to pay for his transportation. Such exceptions have been made by the private relief organizations, notably the Joint Distribution Committee.
In the meanwhile, other complications arose in Bucharest. A change occurred in the internal affairs of the organization in Bucharest which, on behalf of the Jewish Agency (to which had been making the selection of refugees in Damascus for embarkation to Istanbul, and which had been in charge of the technical details in preparing the refugees for departure, bore the mysterious name of J. J. Issau) was caused by the resignation of a new representative of the Jewish Agency, took virtual control of the choice of refugees to be embarked from Damascus. Conflicting stories have reached us, running all the way from accounts of J. J. Issau's extraordinary capacities and leadership to accusations of dilatation and an arbitrary obstructionism. At this writing, I am inclined to the view that J. J. Issau found a highly complex situation connected with the choice of refugees for embarkation, and that his task was made more difficult by the refusal of the authorities to perform his task in a fair manner according to the wishes of the Government.

In an effort to determine the composition and numbers of the new organization set up by the Amanian Government to facilitate refugee travel, I requested information of Mr. J. J. Issau regarding the new arrangement. The official pronouncement on this subject from Mr. J. J. Issau was delivered to me by a member of the International Red Cross (Exhibit G).

On July 26, the International Red Cross transmitted to me the text of a cable from Mr. J. J. Issau to the Amanian Government, dated July 10, which provided further details concerning the advisory commission (Exhibit H).

On July 21, in an effort to break the deadlock existing in Damascus with regard to the choice of the type of refugees to be chosen for embarkation to Istanbul, I was caused to have delivered to Mr. J. J. Issau the attached letter (Exhibit I). Two days prior to that, I threw the support of the refugee board behind the efforts of Mr. J. J. Issau in his efforts to ensure separate ships for the rescue of the people in whom the Vehad Meshalh, and the Syrian-Jewish organizations were interested. Efforts to secure other ships did not cease during the month of June.
2. Turkish boats. There were small Turkish boats which, under an agreement between the

Turkish and Jewish governments, were engaged in conveying Jewish refugees from

Istanbul, April onwards, from the Greek islands to Palesting. The boats were

enlarged by adding a second deck to accommodate the large number of refugees.

The first boat, which arrived on July 2 with 700 passengers, was the

*Abulah*, which carried 550 persons; the second boat, which arrived a week later with

250 persons, was the *Sitra*. Both boats sailed on July 10 with 800 persons on board.

The third boat, which arrived on July 17 with 300 persons, was the *Arara*, which

had been enlarged to accommodate 500 persons. In addition, the Greek

government provided a third boat, the *Sitra*, which was able to accommodate 1000

persons.

(a) The *Abulah*. On July 7th, a boat was

reported to be ready to leave for Istanbul, but it was refused permission to leave.

In view of the fact that this boat was typical of the manner in which emigration from

Palestine was taking place by sea, it will be described in detail.

Preparations for this boat were made by the local

organization of the Jewish community, and in accordance with

the regulations of the Turkish government, the selected

passengers were divided into two groups: those who were

to be repatriated to the town of their origin, and those who were

to be sent to another country. The former group included all

persons who had been in Palestine for more than a year,

and the latter group included all others.

The boat sailed on July 10th with 800 persons on board,

and it arrived in Istanbul on July 14th.

Since

*See section (b) below. A separate report on the

voyage of the *Abulah*, *Sitra*, and *Arara* is

being sent to you.*
Since the refugees are destined for Palestine, one might expect that some emphasis could be placed upon the selection of candidates.

All the passengers, with the exception as noted below, had individual or collective Armenian passenger and Armenian exit visas. Only about 12 of the had received Turkish transit visas in advance, the remainder had none. It was understood with the Turkey Foreign Office as the result of arrangements made by Ambassador Steinmetz, that all would be permitted transit through Turkey as Transit Visas had been provided by the British Embassy. You have already been informed of the general understanding between the British Embassy and the Turkish Foreign Office to the effect that any Jewish refugees wishing on Turkish soil could receive a Palestinian visa.

Upon receipt of information that the ship was on route to immediately advise the embassy in Ankara, in order that the Turkish Foreign Office in turn could be given notice. Due to the circumstances which had been made by Ambassador Steinmetz, the ministry was assured of the full cooperation of both the Turkish Foreign Office and the Turkish Ministry of Communications, in connection with the disembarkation without Turkish visas of the refugees, the provision of transit facilities and railway connections. The mughez appeared in Istanbul harbor at about 2:30 on Sunday morning, July 9th.

A small steamer ship with high decks and motor propulsion, the mughez was expected, with some describes, to accommodate 450 people. It carried 755 passengers to Istanbul. The passengers were crowded into every part of the ship, and it was surprising to find that the steers themselves were not being used for passengers. (As an interesting coincidence, it was discovered that 15 people embarked on the boat in concert with without passports and without Armenian exit permits, and were illegally on this unauthorized boat.)

Under the agreement with the Turkish authorities, the mughez passengers were required to remain on the ship while in harbor. The existing passports had previously been secured on Saturday afternoon, while the mughez was still several hours from the port of embarkation. The were brought to the British passport control office for full collection and certification. The British were most cooperative, and upon arrival at the port, and early Sunday morning, to issue all the necessary travel entry certificates. The passports, including all travel documents, were then returned to the British Embassy for the necessary transit visas. At the same time final arrangements
arrangements were made with the Turkish State rail-
ways for train accommodations to Aleppo, Syria.

It will be recalled, however, that the Jewish Foreign
Office had previously suggested that a special
train be used for the return of 400 refugees
weekly on the twice-weekly train which travelled
between Aleppo and Aleppo. It was expected, therefore,
that it would be necessary to divide the number
passengers into two groups and on two or more trains.
The Minister of Communications, however, generously
provided a special train for the Jewish passengers.
As a result, the entire group was able to leave
on one train on Friday evening, July 10th.

The distribution of the 800 passengers was
as follows:

208 children, of whom 199 were children
from Transnistria.

68 refugees newly arrived, of whom there
were two Magyars, two Croats, and
seven others, mainly from Hungary, and 38
Czechs. 107 Magyars, of whom 95 were from
Transnistria and 12 from other parts of
the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in addition to
the returnees from Transnistria.

20 Jewish citizens.

12 mixed Polish, non-Jewish, and so forth.

Total

On behalf of the refugees, various special
problems had to be met. Arrangements had to be made
for the Jewish officials to travel on the first
train in order to provide food for the refugees while
they remained at the station. Additional problems
arose in securing the necessary permits for the children,
arrangements being made by us after some slight delay.

Only proper accredited representatives were
permitted to board the train, nor could any passenger
travel on the train which left the station at a later
hour. The passengers were only permitted to travel
by means of small motor boats. The train itself was
then stopped at the railway station, which
was on the opposite side of the embankment; the
refugees were assembled in an orderly way, and were
assorted directly to the railway. The train left
with a police escort.
it was hoped that the foundation had been laid
at this time for the continued arrival of
large bearing refugees from Constantza. Reference
has been made to the Turkish boats and the Greek
boat, ayymie, which were being held in readiness
for departure from Constantza.

(b) the ayymie, bulbul, and asufraga, after
weeks or daily in this area to
have exchange
dispatched of messages to constanta through indirect
channels, representations to the Turkish foreign
office and srezzana to aid in obtaining for the
departure of the boats which were scheduled to leave
constantza, five vessels, we received the news on
August 4 that the ayymie, bulbul, and asufraga
were in the black sea en route to Constantza. First
reports from the black sea entrance of the asufraga
were that all three vessels and then that the bulbul
and the ayymie had entered the entrance. It later
developed that in fact only the bulbul had some port,
at arrived on August 6 with 300 passengers, who were
disembarked to continue by rail on August 6. The
story of the disaster connected with the sinking
and sinking, of the ayymie, along with the machine
chaining of the passengers in the water, has been
dispatched for you through telegraph and letter. The
ayymie as reported, at my request and at our
direction disembarked its passengers at ignada, a
Turkish port on the black sea and under the auspices
of the Turkish government the 400 passengers, in-
duding the rescued from the asufraga, were brought
by rail to Istanbul by the courtesy of the Turkish
authorities, they arrived in Istanbul on August
19 and proceeded to Palestine on August 19.

the black sea entrance to the asufraga
naturally occasioned various reviews in conference
by the various representatives of relief organiza-
tions regarding the future action which should be
taken for rescue activities to be conducted by sea
patrols. The position was taken by me at the con-
ference that the rescue ships can not set out for
rescues, as long as no the rescue operations are known
to the passengers, it was incumbent upon me to proceed
in our rescue operations. (the loss of the asufraga
was the only casualty, there all its similar
voyages by other vessels, willing under similar
circumstances, had been successfully completed)
with this, I am grateful to the war service
board for its prompt support of this policy.

Y. Rumanian
3. **Jewish ships.** The Jewish Government, it appears, is now in a position to admit permits to the departure of Jewish refugees from that country. It is reported that they have offered the use of certain ships for the transportation of refugees. The Agency in Istanbul has indicated its willingness to accept the use of certain boats as additional means of transportation, one of the vessels mentioned is the *Julia*. On July 16, a message was received from the Agency of the International Committee to the effect that the *Julia* would be prepared to depart within approximately ten days of the date mentioned. Moreover, it is now understood that another boat could sail under Jewish name without protective services, and it is now possible for the *Julia* to sail to Turkey. No other boats have been offered by local steamship agencies, namely the *Nolnol* and the *Nolnol*. All of the above are over 500 tons in weight, and it is so to be noted that no Turkish boat of more than 300 tons is permitted to leave Turkish waters without a special permit. Such a permit has been requested for the *Nolnol*.

In the meantime, on July 27, the Turkish Government took steps to recall all of its shipping from foreign waters. This was followed on August 3 by the Turkish removal of diplomatic and economic relations with the Jewish Government. Obviously, the Jewish Government was not satisfied with the results of its efforts to facilitate the movement of refugees. The Agency in Istanbul has indicated its willingness to accept the use of certain boats as additional means of transportation, one of the vessels mentioned is the *Julia*. On July 16, a message was received from the Agency of the International Committee to the effect that the *Julia* would be prepared to depart within approximately ten days of the date mentioned. Moreover, it is now understood that another boat could sail under Jewish name without protective services, and it is now possible for the *Julia* to sail to Turkey. No other boats have been offered by local steamship agencies, namely the *Nolnol* and the *Nolnol*. All of the above are over 500 tons in weight, and it is so to be noted that no Turkish boat of more than 300 tons is permitted to leave Turkish waters without a special permit. Such a permit has been requested for the *Nolnol*.
the boats above mentioned. Of course, when the situation clears sufficiently to permit the sailing of Turkish vessels, the Turkish officials will be requested by us to encourage in the movement of refugees from the Adrianople country to Istanbul, on route to Palestine.

Referring again to the statistics concerning emigration from Armenia during the first six months of the year (Exhibit B), you will note that the number of persons who arrived in Istanbul by rail numbered only 55, all of these were in possession of Turkish transit visas which were issued under the agreement for the authorization of nine transit visas per week. Thereafter, the continuing refusal of the Bulgarian government to grant facilities to refugees had limited the number traveling from Adrianople with the changed attitude of the Bulgarian government towards transport, it is claimed by us that a flow of rescue traffic by rail will develop out of Armenia. We are waiting momentarily for the arrival into Armenia of non-Russian refugees who will receive priority by us in being evacuated by sea or rail.

Regarding the arrangement of nine visas per week, this has now undergone a radical revision, in view of the valuable offers made by the Turkish government, it has agreed to issue transit visas on application to any number of Jews who apply for them, provided that they hold the proper documents (see Exhibit C), which important agreement by a revolutionary departure in principle, eliminating as it does away with the technical barriers which existed, and which we have been attempting to break down since the inception of the "ex-refugee board.

... Jewish population in Bulgaria: For your information, we are advised that the Jewish population of Bulgaria today is divided as follows:

- Sofia 8000 persons
- Khust 5000 persons
- Ruse 3000 persons
- Varna 4000 persons
- Vlasten 3000 persons
- Samsun 3000 persons each
- Vardar 3000 persons each
- Vidin
- Dispersed in various towns and villages 12000 persons

Total 45000 persons

The
The number of Jews deported from Bulgaria is said to be 12,000 to 16,000. Deporations took place about a year ago, and comprised largely the Jewish people of Thrace and Macedonia, whose territories had come under Bulgarian occupation.

1. Exchange of Jewish Refugees for German Nationals

You have mentioned being advised by telegraph of an exchange which took place in Istanbul on July 3, 1943. In virtue of this exchange, 283 Jewish refugees arriving from the concentration camps of Bergen-Belsen and Theresienstadt were exchanged for 287 nationals from Egypt, South Africa, and Australia. This exchange took place in Istanbul, under the auspices of the Turkish Red Crescent. The differential in the numbers of persons exchanged resulted from a deficit in a former exchange, in which the number of persons exceeded the number of Jewish refugees.

The 283 refugees were chosen by the Gestapo on an unknown basis from a list of 5,000 names submitted by the Jewish Agency. The refugees, who were destined for Palestine, all had close relatives residing there, or were veteran soldiers. They were in possession of certificates issued by the Palestine Government as the result of applications to the Jewish Agency, thereafter transmitted by the British government to the Palestinian authorities. The attached statistical data (exhibit 1) are provided regarding this exchange group.

We are informed that there remain dues to four thousand exchange certificates of the above-mentioned character outstanding, but the British contend that they are not in possession of any additional exchange certificates. A separate list is held, containing figures which were supplied by interested individuals coming from Bergen-Belsen, who were included in the exchange group. Setting forth the numbers and nationalities of the intereses still in question, you will note that a substantial number are nationals of various Central and South American countries. These data may be useful in the event that developments permit an exchange of the holders of Central and South American passports for Jewish nationals not yet offered for exchange.

2. Rescue by Land from Bulgaria

With the execution of 11 of its persons who presented themselves at the Turkish border without Turkish transit visas in May and early June, evacuation from Bulgaria has been legal and by land. However, as will be noted from
from the statistics in Exhibit H, the number admitted to Turkey in transit from Bulgaria during the first six months of 1944 was relatively small: 463 persons, including 46 children under the children's scheme. As in the case of Romania, nine Turkish transit visas per week had been agreed upon for Sofia. The principle of refusing exit permits to Jewish people in Bulgaria had greatly hampered the land flow from that country.

From time to time it had been reported that the Bulgarian border was entirely closed to Jewish refugees. A number of conflicting stories on this point were reported. We were informed that the border had been closed; that exit visas were issued in some cities and not in others; that exit visas were permitted for women and children and for men exceeding those between the ages of 13 and 45; that exit visas are issued to everyone, even for men between the ages of 13 and 45, but that in this instance such a consideration individually and handled on the merits. A recital of these stories illustrates the difficulty in determining the exact situation which then existed in Bulgaria. Since the beginning of July, however, there has been an increase in immigration from Bulgaria, indicating apparently the government's changed attitude towards Jewish emigration.

From July 1 to July 13, 1944, 50 persons arrived in Istanbul from Bulgaria, which is a substantial increase in the rate as compared with averages for the past six months, but still on the whole pitifully small.

Representations were made to the Turkish authorities to secure their consent to admit into Turkish territory all refugees from Bulgaria who might appear at the border, even though they might not be in possession of the Turkish transit visas. Assurances had been given to the Turkish Foreign Office by the British Embassy that all Jewish refugees appearing in Turkey would be given Palestine immigration visas. (This is a general assurance and does not relate solely to refugees coming from Bulgaria.) Appropriate instructions were sent to the Turkish border guards by the Foreign Office and eleven or twelve persons actually did present themselves at the frontier during May and June. They were detained by the Turkish authorities, and after investigation were released for onward transportation to Palestine. Subsequently, in June, seven other people presented themselves at the frontier. They were taken into custody by the Turkish frontier guards. Approaches were made
to the Turkish foreign office by the embassy to secure their release and admission into Turkey.

The embassy wires sent the necessary instructions to the frontier, but, prior to the arrival of the instructions all seven were returned to Bulgaria. Since then there have been no illegal arrivals from the land border from Bulgaria.

(*Subsequently, the seven people reappeared at the border and were admitted into Turkey upon the basis of the authorization previously given. As are considering how this precedent might be employed to have lists sent to the border guards in advance of arrival; see also exhibit 1.*)

An explanation of the foregoing, the understandable Turkish attitude has been that it is not possible to retain any in advance who is a genuine refugee and who is a political agent or spy attempting to enter the country. In this question is the long-standing antagonism between Turkey and Bulgaria. Nevertheless, this obstinate agreement has been reached with the Turkish authorities, as reported to you on August 19, for admission into Turkish territory of any number of refugees presenting themselves at the frontier without admission into Turkey, but who are in possession of identifying documents, as set forth in the agreement. Steps are under way to take advantage of these new facilities.

Up to the present, with the exceptions noted, only those who have actually been in possession of Turkish transit visas have been admitted into the country from Bulgaria.

This appears to narrow the problem entirely to the field of American instruments issued from Bulgaria, towards which we are bending our efforts.

By grave and previous efforts has been made to bring people from Bulgaria to Istanbul by sea. At one of...all the Turkish vessels were sent to Suruce, but returned empty. From information at hand it would appear that passengers were not embarked because of difficulty created by the authorities (there was some question regarding the adequacy of safety provisions).

In a telegram from Ambassador Veinhardt, you were instructed, due to the timing of the arrival, the Bulgarian authorities had withdrawn permission to release ships to be utilized for refugee. The Bulgarians feared the loss of additional vessels, and the reason was maintained that the immense cost needed for military purposes. As a result, no transportation for sea voyages was available.
available during June, and emigration from that
country ceased.

There was no question in our minds, however,
but that a substantial movement of refugees
could be initiated from Bulgaria to Istanbul by
boat if the above conditions could be over-
scome. To this end, for example, that there
were at least 1,000 young people in Bulgaria
prepared and ready to go to Palestine, with
the assistance of the Embassy, the question of
the departure of the boat and the visa was
presented to the Turkish Foreign Office, and
permission obtained for these boats to proceed
from Varna. In addition, the Turkish Foreign
Office had encouraged and authorized the con-
tinuous movement of these or other similar boats
in a circle, providing, as many as 500 refugees
a week to arrive in Turkey, provided facilities
for onward transportation to Palestine can be
arranged. All possible efforts and resources
are being employed to expedite the movement of
these ships. I have been discussing with the
Catalyan Shipping Company, operating vessels
from Istanbul to the Balkans, to explore the pos-
sibilities of securing additional Bulgarian ships
in the event of a sudden influx of refugees.

On January

The tragedy that befell the Jewish people
in Hungary immediately following the occupation
by the Germans on March 13, 1944, is too well
known to require elaboration here. The steps
taken by the Nazis in their program of annihila-
tion are detailed in a report made available
to me in Istanbul (Exhibit A). The speed with
which the Germans executed their barbarities in
Hungary is referred to in the interview by me
with Jori Brand at Jito on June 22, 1944: "How
has been done in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia,
and other countries in years has been done in Hungary in
a few weeks—its all over about very quickly,"
said he. Efforts to effectuate rescue from
Hungary through countries other than the Balkans
into Turkey for settlement in Palestine are known
to me. Under present circumstances, direct
emigration from Hungary is not possible. Refugees,
who can, make their way outward through Austria
and end up in Bulgaria and Turkey.

... Present movement... as reported on
July 25, a limited movement of refugee traffic
from Hungary across the borders into Austria has
been
been operating since 1944, and it is reported that some 5000 to 4000 have crossed
the border into Ausonia in this way. This
includes Hungarians and refugees from
Romania and Slovakia who had previously made their
way to Hungary. In spite of a common-inspired
Hungarian decree threatening the death penalty
for refugees crossing the border illegally and
for anyone assisting them, the Hungarians have
allowed their eyes to take traffic. It is
known that a larger movement can be effected
through this method, and with all seems to our
dispossession we have encouraged the agency charged
with this operation, to increase its personal
and supplement its energies to this end. It
must be pointed out that this movement is com-
plex and requires a high degree of underground
organization. The results at this writing
have been only sporadic, but a recent report
indicates a larger flow of refugees across the
border—every effort is held, and to evade
these refugees from Ausonia at the earliest
moment.

It is of interest to note here that in
the present circumstances in Hungary a number
of people who escape from Slovaki to Hungary
are not attempting to return to Slovaki,
unlike for those people in European countries
today it is apparently a relative matter.

Early in July it was announced that the
Hungarian government in Budapest has declared that
it is unlikely to grant entry to Ausonia to Jews
except one child per family on condition that an acceptable
document is certified that they would have entered Ausonia within
three years for residence, the United Kingdom,
or the United States. No indication has been
received by us which could indicate whether this
means three years from the date of entry into
Ausonia or three years after the termination of
the occupation or three years after the establishment
of the new order, or three years after the
termination of the war. In addition, there will remain
the question of transportation from Ausonia to Sweden
which, by the next direct route, must involve
the possession of formed transit visas.)

In one of my conversations with Orszagmu
he expressed especial interest in helping in
arrangements for the local movement of Hungarian
refugees into Ausonia, to displace the illegal
traffic, of which he appeared to be aware, and
to establish a bilateral basis for those entering
Ausonia (see above, Section 2).

B. Other
3. Other methods of rescue: Apparently as a result of pressure from the UNRRA refugee board, the United States, the International Red Cross, the Swedish government, the Swiss government, and other neutral sources, the Hungarian government determined to oppose an aroused world opinion by offering concessions and slight modifications to some specified sections of the Hungarian Jewish population. This action, to the best of our knowledge, occurred sometime about July 13, 1944, and was reported to us on July 21.

4. Hungarian movement through Turkey: On July 21, 1944, I urged Brezina, Hungarian minister to Ankara, to grant visas for the entrance of unlimited numbers of refugees from Hungary. On August 3, Brezina reported to me that his government had authorized such visas in the agreement but noted, considering the heavy bombing of Hungarian centers, and the limitations imposed thereby upon food and housing facilities, that these refugees would become charges of the Hungarian government. Brezina was pressed by me to agree for his government to permit these refugees to remain temporarily in Turkey, with the promise that we should be able to supply the necessary food and other supplies through the Red Cross. A reply from Brezina, the ineffectiveness of such request, is momentarily awaited.

Similar requests were made of Balabanoff, Bulgarian minister to Ankara, to permit the transit through Bulgaria of Hungarian Jews traveling through Greece on route to Turkey and eventually to Palestine. Balabanoff consented to press his government to issue entrance and exit visas for these refugees when they arrived. Meanwhile the embassy requested of the Turkish foreign office that entrance visas into Turkey for the above referred to refugees be granted, and that their Turkish visas upon exit from Turkey be so notified. The Turkish foreign office agreed to do so, and notified the embassy that such authorizations had been telegraphed by the Turkish consul to the UNRRA in Bulgaria and the Red Cross officials. We requested that this information be imparted to the representatives of the International Red Cross in the three satellite capitals by Balabanoff, Balkan representative of the International Red Cross.
The above it may be seen that the area into and out of the newly established satellite countries are virtually closed off the通行点 of view for approaches whatever of varying out of security.笑外談 the situation at the Hungarian border and on broken in areas beyond, we are currently informed to take back through whatever means are available to us in Turkey. As previously indicated, however, the basic difficulty to be overcome is the absence of proper signals for the departure of the Hungarian Jews.

As the Hungarian church, pursuant to our representation that the leaders of the Catholic church throughout the region had made strong representations to the Hungarian government to close the operation, communications, and deportations of the Jewish population or Hungary, I visited the alleged amount in Hungary, with the intention of a further and more immediate step in the matter caused for the assistance rendered by the in this respect, tell-me-want's representations, in sum, the subject, at (b) requesting, that further steps be taken to urge the release of the Jewish church, as a result of the reported use of the large Hungarian population in the voluntarily joined in voluntary service by the Jews in the region, or otherwise, or other immediate assistance has been or otherwise.

For the moment, it should be noted that the Catholic hierarchy, which enjoys a large influence in Hungary, took unusual spontaneous measures to prevent Hungarian Jewish citizens from making a recent report to you on an urgent step can relate to the building of a thousand of Hungarian Jews in air-raids shelters, in spite of energetic small postures.

All reports indicate that the extreme persecution and deportations have for the present ended in Hungary. The structure placed upon the Jewish population, however, still remains in force, and new information received is more or less because of the serious nature of the situation. We, checking with such facts as are available, indicate that the Hungarian leaders mass communications are on the whole, and that the ultimate consequence of their visitation can be a series of violent reactions towards their decision. The way's and these inevitably to be
be closing in upon them and their consciences, they appear also to be looking for "a way out." This is our moment of opportunity and it should be exploited to the utmost.

At this point, we have recommended that sanctions and armed pressure from the West, from neutral governments, the church, and through every possible friend of Hungary, be brought to bear upon the authorities at this time.

The word of the hour is a driving force and catalytic agent in focusing upon the Hungarian question—particularly the situation and attitude of responsible leadership—apparently to us in Hungary to have caused the evolution in the Hungarian attitude, systems of control, fear, and new "line" on the part of the military government are in evidence according to information reaching us here.

To Greece

Your representatives in Turkey consider rescue from Greece within their province, and have addressed themselves to this phase of their assignment in the following way:

Our best information discloses that there are between five and eight thousand Jewish people in one or the other of the parts of the present at least are in comparative safety, either in transit or in territory controlled by the Greek liberation movement. There are also approximately 2,000 in hiding in Athens and the vicinity. The latter number is being continually reduced by the war effort and by the escape of those who are able to find some means for fleeing to safety.

The organization of the rescue of the Jewish people in Greece in thorough evacuation to Turkey was exceedingly difficult. It required seven days for that purpose and put into operation. The use of three or four teams has secured with the services of the necessary Greek boat captains who knew Greek territorial waters intimately, and the movement of Jewish fugitives from Greece to Turkey and thence to Palestine began about October, 1943. The following table shows the number of people rescued from Greece from October, 1942, to the end of June, 1944.

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Towards the middle of June, I was informed by the agency in Istanbul charged with these operations that, due to the lack of a base in Turkey at that time, the plan could not be undertaken. The rescue from Greece in this manner had been suspended. Consequently, no Jewish refugees arrived from Greece during the month of July, until it was not until August 1 that news was received in Istanbul that one further contingent of 60 refugees arrived in Turkey and were at Izmir.

I was informed that escape from Athens by people now in hiding there, for purposes of the trip to Turkey, is not difficult. The refugees are brought from Rhodes to an island off the coast mainland, with the assistance of the British, which is not far from the island and while waiting there, we bring these refugees from hiding and arrange to transport them to the island to congregate there. There could be danger for the refugees, unless their arrival on the island could be timed to meet the boats sent there to evacuate them. The chief problem therefore, continued to be transportation from the east coast of the island to the Turkish coast, for which a Turkish base was required. It became obvious that the movement from the island could be simplified and organized if there were a base on the Turkish coast where the people could land and where the ships could be refueled, with a base could serve as a point of communication with Greece.

The base is available. The problem of a base and the organization of its operations must be met, and the reception of the refugees and their onward transportation to Palestine must be provided for. In conversations with certain American representatives, they agreed to make their experience available in organizing such a base, and to be as helpful as they could in this operation, but they requested that it become a responsibility of the war refugee board. 

October through December, 1943 300
January, 1944 73
February 25
March 62
April 175
May 74
June 104
Total - 744
I agreed. The embassy was then requested to secure the authorization of the Turkish foreign office for the establishment of a base exclusively for the reception of refugees. The foreign office has given its informal consent; while it is not expected that a large number of refugees can be brought from Greece as a result of this operation, it is felt that no possibility should be ignored in which a single refugee can be reached, and that the operation of a Turkish base should be made a part of our activity.

For completion of your records, the enclosed statistics (Exhibit F) are given concerning Jewish emigration from Turkey during the first six months of 1944.
1. **Representatives of Organizations.**

The unusual situation arising from the surfact
of representatives which I found here in Istanbul
upon my return on June 19, outlined in section 2
above, requires further elaboration here.

It is regrettable, in my opinion, that so many
organizations were permitted to send representa-
tives to Turkey at this time. This was especially
regrettable in the light of the type of represent-
atives sent on several of the organizations.
A higher type of representative, whose duties
were clearly defined, charged with an unselfish
spirit, especially in cooperating with other
agencies, unquestionably would have led to more
concentrated effort and better coordinated results.

Visits by Dr. UGARI of the Hebrew University,
Jerusalem, and R. HILLOP KAPLAN of the Jewish
Agency, will result, I am told, in additional
personnel to supplement the efforts of Dr. Barlas.
It is freely admitted by all, including Dr. Barlas,
that additional assistance by top-flight men during this
crisis might upon additional doors for research
through Turkey. It should be said, however, for
the Jewish Agency, that the results to date here could
not have been achieved without its original activities,
initiative and exertions.

The American Joint Distribution Committee, which
rightfully enjoys an enviable and solid reputation
among governments as well as private organizations,
had been conducting a broad program of rescue from,
and relief work in, the Balkan countries. Through
its office in Istanbul, it has provided, between 50
and 100 per cent, depending upon the individual
cases, of all money expended by the rescue and
relief organizations here. Some of these projects
it has undertaken itself, directly, for others, it
has provided the funds to, and collaborated with,
other organizations, notably the Jewish Agency and
other affiliated with it.

The program of the Joint Distribution Committee
has been divided broadly under three headings:

1. (a) **Financing local organizations in the**
       Balkan countries which assist Jewish refugees
       from other countries, notably Hungary, to enter
       Romania, which maintain them while in Romania,
       and which facilitate their emigration from that
country. The Joint Distribution Committee provides
       the greater part of the funds expended for these purposes.

(b) **Assisting emigration of Jewish refugees**
       from Romania and Greece to Turkey, on route to
       Palestine. The Joint Distribution Committee

    contribution
contribution towards this work covers 80 per cent of the total costs.

(C) Maintaining all needy Jewish refugees in Turkey while in transit, and providing onward transportation from Turkey to Palestine. These requirements are not 100 per cent by the Joint Distribution Committee.

Approximately 4,000,000 have been expended by the Joint Distribution Committee for the above described purposes. Since November, 1943, approximately 6,000 refugees have been assisted by the Joint Distribution Committee in their emigration from the Balkan countries to Palestine.

II. Dispatching food-parcels to Roumania, Transylvania, and Theresienstadt, through the International Red Cross. Approximately 14,000 five-kilogram packages, costing 100,000, have already been sent under this project.

III. Supporting through local Turkish Jewish communities about 425 persons of Turkish nationality, who were repatriated in 1943 under Nazi threat of deportation from France. For this purpose, between 4,000 and 6,000 monthly are being expended.

(In addition to the foregoing projects in behalf of refugees, the Joint Distribution Committee also partially supports the local charitable institutions of the Turkish Jewish Communities.)

The influence and prestige of the Joint Distribution Committee, the scope of its activities, its energy and its contribution in terms of reputation, experience, money, and morale, can be properly assessed only on the basis of its operations, where the results of its efforts are manifest. The value of the Joint Distribution Committee as the leading private Jewish agency in Istanbul, engaged in effective relief and rescue work in the Balkans and central Europe for assisting Jewish people who are under the threat of extermination by the Nazis, cannot be overestimated. The solid background, the enormous strength and stature of this organization has been demonstrated again by its indispensable value at a critical time in the life of helpless victims.

... and Jabotinsky, who is not an American citizen, representing the Emergency Committee to save the Jewish people of Europe, and L. Leon Solomons, representing...
representing the international rescue and relief committees, are a pronounced handicap in the efforts of the war refugee board and other organizations in the work of rescue. Mr. Jabotinsky is a confessed opportunist. He is also an obstructionist. Unable to operate, without a plan, organization, or means, his methods have been designed to criticize others and employ anarchic devices. Many hours have been devoted to attempting to dis- cuss this individual from embarrassing our government which sponsored his visa, and from hampering the board's program. He continues openly to threaten all organizations and to generate trouble wherever he can even possible. In the latter effort he has done our enjoyed unsatisfactory results. - from his point of view.

Mr. Samberg is talkative and loose in his conversations to a point where the war-ner was reported to be following him, reporting his conversa- tions verbatim, and finding them useful, it was necessary at one time to threaten to have his deported. An effort of the kind with which the board representatives are charged in Istanbul, a hotbed of intrigue at best, makes representatives of all intelligent and neutral powers send their most competent agents for espionage and counter espionage. It is highly dangerous for an American government agency to sponsor or assist persons to enter Turkey as a humanitarian act, where the intrepid agents of enemy agents in to exploit such activities for political purposes of their own. In the case of Mr. Jabotinsky, it would appear that his presence is admittedly designed to aid ultimately the revisionist movement in Palestine, and in the case of Mr. Samberg, to enhance the reputation of the organization which he represents.

The board representatives here have taken the position that it was our responsibility and within the scope of our assignment to coordinate all elements, where possible, including the "lunatic fringe". Efforts to do so have met with some progress, but only at the price of innumerable conferences, restraining devices, apprehension, etc., which would have been better employed in affirmative efforts towards constructive ends. As I write the above, Mr. Morton Y. Hardy, consul general of the United States in Istanbul, has registered a complaint re: certain irresponsible actions of Mr. Samberg, which have undermined the function of the consulate. It is not improbable that, by the time this report reaches you, it may be found necessary to take measures to remove one or both of these "propagandists" from the scene. Should this develop, it may be found necessary to call upon the board for support to this end.

2. The
8. The three phases.

Looking back at the situation as I found it upon my arrival in Turkey in February, 1944, and weighing it in terms of the movement of events, it is apparent that we have passed, even in this brief series, through three definite phases. The intensity and severity of events prior to this pivotal center in and out of the Balkans, render the stage of progress constant imperceptible from day to day. The progress of a fundamental nature in the improvement of the condition of the Jews in the Balkans, even inclusive, summary, can be recorded.

At the first phase, which was found in February, was concerned with deportations, executions, persecutions, and death to thousands in disease-ridden camps, where humans were treated below the status of animals. All this was rampant in the Balkans at that time. Major pressure was directed against the satellite governments to cease these ruthless barbarisms and to break the settlements for refugees uprooted. The violent and organized execrations indicated above are not reported to have almost completely, if not entirely, ceased. While there may be sporadic manifestations in this direction, the accession and Bulgarian governments and even Hungary, as a matter of policy, have ceased these persecutions, deportations, and exterminations, the most conspicuous example of which was the breaking up of the disease-ridden concentration camp in March, 1944, as reported to you in various telegrams. The different settlements are not arriving in collecting the victims.

As the trickle of refugee evacuation from the Balkans via the small boats from45 to 46 and by rail traffic through Bulgaria grew in the aggregate, one felt into a minor stream, while this stream dried up during the month of June, the one had again been broken by the arrival of the third boat, the "Un_Begin," with 700 passengers, in July; the "Altun," with 300 passengers, and the "Altun," with 500 passengers in August, in spite of course, including the tragic war catastrophe occasioned by the sinking of the "Altun."

Attempts to continue evacuation by sea are under way, especially in Algeria.

As the Balkan governments, particularly Bulgaria and Romania, begin, even in this year, to perceive the inevitable collapse of Germany, they become more and more tractable in their
representing attitude towards their Jewish populations. Our efforts to gain succor for their own victimized citizens began to offer more promise. Humanists, from all accounts, ceased all official measures of abuse. And the hue-and-cry calmed by the incessant bombing of human centers, the economic and security situation for a large section of the population of that country became somewhat plastic; transportation was顺畅, housing and food became a problem. Accordingly, the major concern of the nation's government became four-fold: 1) to remain in power; 2) to find a graceful exit from the war; 3) to save their necks; and 4) to salvage their own population and economy. By this deflection from the satisfaction and alleged advantages of exploiting a local minority, and by virtue of the representations made by the war refugee board representatives at a time when the Hungarians were searching for any measure of goodwill from the United States, the Hungarians saw an opportunity to capitalize on the Jewish problem created by them. A virtue could be made of restraint. Having indicated to the Hungarian government that assistance to the Hungarian Jews could be "highly evaluated" at the proper time by the American people the Hungarians seem to have taken the hint in their teeth and seem now genuinely to be making attempts to salvage their Jewish population and to demonstrate a sympathy and interest in the problem they had created by their own hands.

At this turn of events it becomes apparent that the board's program should be reconcentrated in some measure by attempting to bring the government to the point of reinstating, rehabilitating, and reconstituting their own Jewish citizens rather than to attempt to "save heaven and earth" to increase the pitifully small nucleus from each country. Furthermore, as the war's end seemed to approach, the problem which could be occasioned by thousands of stranger people driven to strange lands seemed to become a factor for consideration.

3. Acknowledgements.

I cannot close this report without record- ing my thanks and gratitude to the board for its support of my efforts here. Working remotely, in foreign fields, in the most important neutral country.
country under conditions prescribed by strange laws, customs and habits, under restrictions and with problems connected with enemy territory, the only encouragement I have from day to day apart from the privilege of being able to bring some measure of alleviation to oppressed people derives from a sense that the board and its director are sympathetic with the problems of its representatives abroad and are prepared at all times to support them. So project or proposal suggested by me to the board has been rejected, nor have I been subjected to delaying action or ambiguous rejoinders to my requests. Without this support, our efforts would have been futile.
The embassy in Ankara and the consulate general in Istanbul have, at all times been wholeheartedly cooperative. Ambassador Salimah, in person while in Ankara and his visits to Washington, had specifically requested the Turkish consul, the British consul, and his own staff to give an undertaking as to which they anxiously responded. While the advice andnil of Ambassador Salimah were greatly missed until, his enforced absence, the support of the secretary, the last secretary of the embassy, and their untiring and sympathetic efforts in all our problems are greatly appreciated.

Mr. Walton, Mr. Avery, consul general, and the staff of the consulate general in Istanbul have likewise been most helpful.

No report of this kind could be complete without reference to the steadfast, loyal, and able assistance afforded to me by Mr. Hobert, Mr. Stahl, the tireless, energies and devotion to the task have been exemplary. The same in their own, may be said of the two selected secretaries, Mr. Anderson and Mr. Miller, who have labored tirelessly and skillfully and with self-sacrifice.

A. Future Operations.

At this writing, with even wilder rumors than usual floating up and down the corridor, it cannot be calculated that form the board’s program in Russia will take. The situation changes literally from day to day. The possibilities have established but been to work on the assumption that the refugee problem will be indefinitely prolonged, and that each day’s rescue must proceed vigorously, without relation to the hopes and rumors regarding the termination of the war in the near future. Obviously, as indicated in section I above, the three phases referred to have not been described in many ways, but from the point of view of a rescue center facing the Balkans, it is nothing short of a calamity.

While the results established and indicated herein cannot be measured in terms of enormous numbers of persons actually evacuated from the Balkans, this can in no way be interpreted as detracting from the broad opportunity and the indispensable necessity of an energetic program.
directed exclusively towards rescue work by an agency of the United States government in Turkey. The various established relief and rescue organizations, now at work here are severely limited in their organizing ability, scope, and personnel and cannot act on a sufficiently high level with government officials necessary for the successful completion of an emergency rescue endeavor in war-time. The prestige and influence of the government of the United States as a whole are hardly represented by ambassadorial Steinhardt, especially in a changing war-zone, is hardly to be measured when it is employed with discretion to humane ends. It becomes repetition to assert that the results, both actual and in terms of the morale of the victims of oppression, resulting from the appointment of board representatives to operate authoritatively and backed by the full weight of the embassy, have had a constructive effect which should be gratifying to the people, the director, and his associates. While the people in the villages and the districts start with respect, awe, affection, and hope for salvation to resident non-Jews for the American people, the still visible massing in the raids and in the raids of the massacres are permitted to see evidence of the outstretched arms of mercy in some tangible form. The very existence of such re-establishment here, operating with the full strength of the embassy and administration as reported previously, has a startling effect on the people of the villages, and provided for them the necessary evidence of the implementation of the moral nation's philosophy regarding its sympathies for democracy and the oppressed. The slum will be recalled to learn that following, the recent brook in relations between Turkey and Germany, when individual Jews, Muslims, and Ottomans, known to be anti-Nazi, were threatened with annihilation from Turkey, they turned to the United States government in Ankara, the consul in Amman, to the Near East, and representatives for all, they received the one of the fugitives, a woman with a one-year-old child who has lived in Turkey for 10 years, who asked why she has come to the United States officials, replied: "Here else should I go?" It seemed only natural to choose here, she also readily accepted the recognition, by the victim to have come to serve succeeded in enhancing our sense of the responsibility of representatives of the United States in the Near East, and to call to enhance our appreciation of the opportunity in the assignment and in the broader implications.

As on previous incumbency here, it is my observation that Turkey is a winner into the village. The job, as I saw it, was to attempt to
make of the window, a door. In the spring of 1944, a small aperture had been established; today it looks as a large gateway through which our aims are directed, not alone to bring out the suffering and ill-treated victims of persecution, but also for the return trip into the Balkans by government agencies who may restore the surviving minority populations to their deserved status as self-respecting and self-sustaining citizens of their re-established homelands, citizens whose torture, we and our allies have earned for them the right to a higher perspective of the living spirit of freedom, security, and human dignity.

Respectfully submitted,

Ira A. Hirschmann
Attaché

Enclosures:
Table of Exhibits and Exhibit A-C inclusive
# TABLE OF EXHIBITS

**Report from Mr. A. Hirshmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Pahl, Executive Director of the War Refugee Board.**

September 11, 1944

| Exhibit A | Minutes of an informal meeting of representatives of Relief Organizations in Istanbul, July 10, 1944. |
| Exhibit B | Minutes of an informal meeting of the Operating Group of Relief Organizations, July 17, 1944. |
| Exhibit C | Organization Representations engaged in Relief and Rescue Activities in Istanbul, July 10, 1944. |
| Exhibit D | Emigration statistics: Huzenja, January-June 1944. |
| Exhibit E | Paraphrase of telegram sent to Washington, an Embassy's 1230, July 5, 1944. |
| Exhibit F | Communication received July 13, 1944, from Mr. All. Grosplan. |
| Exhibit G | Copy of telegram dated July 10, 1944, addressed to Hungarian Legislation, Lisbon, by Mr. Antonescu. |
| Exhibit H | Letter to Mr. Zissu, July 21, 1944. |
| Exhibit I | Memorandum of conversation held with Mr. Black, July 21, 1944. |
| Exhibit J | Letter to Dr. Black, August 1, 1944. |
| Exhibit K | Composition of exchange group which arrived in Istanbul July 6, 1944. |
| Exhibit L | Persons who arrived in transit in Istanbul from Bulgaria, January-June 1944. |
| Exhibit M | Part I: Survey of events.  
Part II: Extract from deposition of two Slovenian Jews.  
Part III: Report of a Hungarian deported woman from the concentration camp. |
| Exhibit N | List of Hungarian government, July 10, 1944. |
| Exhibit O | Number of immigrants to Palestine from Turkey, January-June, 1944. |
EXHIBIT A.

Minutes of an Informal Meeting

held on Monday, July 10, 1944,
at the office of the O.U.I., Istanbul,
of Representatives of Relief Organizations in Istanbul


The meeting was called to order at 4:46 p.m. by Dr. I. A. Hirschmann, as representative of the War Refugee Board.

At the outset, Dr. Hirschmann explained that the entire meeting was informal and off the record, and requested that no reports be made by the representatives of the respective organizations to their head offices until such time as definite accomplishments could be reported.

Dr. Hirschmann explained that he had called the meeting pursuant to suggestions made by Ambassador Steinhart at an informal luncheon conference, which he arranged in Ankara on July 2, 1944. A number of people now present had likewise been present at Ambassador Steinhart’s luncheon.

For the benefit of those who were not there on July 2, Dr. Hirschmann recapitulated briefly some of the things concerning which the Ambassador had spoken to the organization representatives. The Ambassador urged that the relief organizations coordinate their efforts for the rescuing of persecuted peoples. Independent action, such as competitive bidding for ships, independent démarches with various authorities without regard to what others might have done before, conflicting reports and projects, all made very difficult the work of the embassy in its relationships with the individual organizations, with Washington and with officials in Turkey. All this had an effect disadvantageous to those whom the several agencies tried to serve. The Ambassador had, therefore, suggested that the work of the organizations, all of which was directed to the same end, be coordinated, perhaps through the establishment of a committee upon which would be represented all the agencies in Turkey engaged in refugee relief work. However, recognizing that such a committee might be too large and unwieldy, the Ambassador had suggested, further, that a smaller operating committee be created which would be responsible for the execution of the day-to-day work involved in the rescue and relief programs. The Ambassador also proposed that both committees operate under the leadership of the War Refugee Board and its special representative, Dr. Hirschmann.

In accordance with the Ambassador’s suggestion, Dr. Hirschmann had called today’s meeting together. Furthermore, he wished to take advantage of the presence in Istanbul of Dr. Lagans, Mr. Schwartz and Dr. Kaplan, all of whom
had had wide experience, and whose judgment and advice would be most helpful.

Dr. Hirschmann went on to explain the great and sympathetic interest of the United States Government in refugee rescue activities, which had been exemplified in part through the creation of the War Refugee Board. Dr. Hirschmann had been sent to Turkey by the Board both to initiate refugee projects and to assist the agencies already in the field in those programs upon which they were working. He referred to the many ways in which the Board can be helpful to the private agencies, and called upon them to make use of him to the fullest extent where his aid and that of the Board might be of assistance. He briefly outlined the problems in Istanbul and Bucharest, the point of origin of many of the refugees now passing through Turkey, and then asked for suggestions from the floor as to the manner in which the work in both centers might be coordinated in order to achieve maximum results.

Dr. James stated that he had studied the situation in Turkey at first hand, and for a number of days, and had spoken with a great many people. He felt that, although there may be room for improvement in the work up to this point, it was wise for all to withhold judgment at the present time. It was his own feeling, however, that accomplishments have been very great, and the work of the organizations very much better than he had been led to expect. Dr. James then outlined briefly what he had learned during his various conversations concerning the position of Jewish people in the Italian countries, and emphasized the scope of the problems which, in his opinion, made all the more necessary concerted action on the part of the relief organizations. He recommended, therefore, that the representatives of the various organizations form themselves into an advisory committee which would meet from time to time to report, advise and suggest programs and plans of action to a smaller actions committee, to be created, which would conduct the day-to-day work.

This smaller committee, however, need not take instructions from the larger advisory committee, although being guided by it. He asked for coordination and cooperation behind the War Refugee Board and Dr. Hirschmann. Concerning the distribution of places on the boats coming from Romania, he suggested as a solution to the problem in Bucharest that the passengers be designated, one-half by the Zionist representative, and one-half by an apolitical person.

Dr. Schwartz stated that thought should be given at this meeting to the mechanics of its set up, and not to the designation of responsibilities. He agreed with what Dr. James had said, but did not like the concept of an advisory committee. In his opinion, there should be general discussions and interchange of information and views among the agency representatives, but the representatives should not be crystallized into a formal advisory group. He preferred that everything be done on an informal basis. Dr. Schwartz then made the following suggestions:

1) The representative of the War Refugee Board should call the people together whenever he thinks they should meet, or when their advice is necessary. He pointed out that a more formal organization might result in complications arising out of the fact that a number of the representatives, being
Palestinian, were British subjects, and consequently it might be embarrassing for them if they were tied up too closely with an American organization, the War Refugee Board. Their actions might be construed as being subject to American control.

2) The Joint Distribution Committee could not formally tie itself up with a mixed group, which included agencies interested not only in relief, but also in political work. The JDC is non-political in character, and is interested solely in humanitarian work. Therefore, it does not want to, nor can it, become involved in political matters. However, the JDC would be very happy to meet with representatives of any organization either at the call of Dr. Wizsemann or at that of the other organizations if they think it desirable.

He recommended, therefore, that the small working committee be made up of the representatives of agencies effectively working in the field of rescuing people or the relief of people in occupied countries. The JDC would be very glad to participate in such a committee, provided its make-up were satisfactory to it.

As Dr. Schwartz saw it, the work in Istanbul divided itself into three sections:

a) The rescue of people by providing transport.
b) The relief of people in occupied areas.
c) Providing for rescued people while in transit through Turkey.

He suggested that the smaller committee be made up of representatives of the Jewish Agency, the JDC, and minority groups, even though their participation in the work was small because they are nevertheless interested. He suggested a working committee of a maximum of five people, keeping the number small for the sake of getting things done.

Mr. Lefebvre opposed the conception of an advisory committee, and thought that such meetings should be in the form of conferences, as more closely characterizing their work. Of course, the principle of all the organizations is to save as many people as possible, and the function of the conference would be to put workable ideas before the group. He touched briefly on the matter of the selection of emigrants, and pointed out that some of the organizations, such as the Jewish Agency, have responsibilities toward Palestine which must guide them in making selections. Therefore, this question cannot be regarded as a simple one. He recommended that discussions for the improvement and expansion of the work be taken up immediately after today's meeting, and that the organizations intensify their efforts.

Mr. Karas suggested omitting all discussions having to do with the refugee position in Bucharest, and that this meeting should confine itself to the question of organization. He thought that the War Refugee Board should call meetings of representatives whenever three organizations requested them.

Mr. Jabotinsky stated that he had been studying the
situation for upwards of two months and that during this period he had undertaken no projects at all. In his opinion the cooperation offered by the American embassy had been good, and he expressed his expectation that, with the presence of Fr. Hirschmann, the cooperation extended through the embassy and other channels will be even better. He also thought that the rescue work done by Messrs. Schindler, Averbuch, and others whom he mentioned by name, had been excellent. He thought, however, that the question of the distribution of places on boats cannot be the subject of discussion, as this is related to that of responsibility for determining who is or who is not suitable material for Palestine. He thought it important that, in setting up the smaller committee, due regard should be had for assisting non-Jewish refugees; he was glad the group had met, since it brought the relief and rescue work under United States Government auspices.

At this point, Fr. Hirschmann in response to a question defined the purposes of the two proposed committees as follows: the larger group would be informative, and the smaller group would make operating decisions.

Fr. Lemberg was of the opinion that the time had arrived when all the organizations should cooperate and work together, and that everyone should participate in the work, avoiding "monopoly".

Mr. Aslan suggested that Fr. Hirschmann assume the responsibility for designating the smaller operating committee, to consist of up to five persons, not counting Fr. Hirschmann, who would serve as chairman. The meeting unanimously accepted this proposal.

Fr. Hirschmann accepted this responsibility, saying that he would designate a committee after full discussions with those present.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15.

Herbert Katzki
Minutes of an Informal Meeting
of the Operating Group of Relief Organizations
held at the American Consulate, Istanbul
July 17, 1944.

Those present: J. A. Hirschmann, Herbert Katzki, for the
Refugee Board; Joseph Schwartz and Ruben Reznik, American
Joint Distribution Committee; Lilian Kaplan, Chaim
Berlans and Zeev Schind, Jewish Agency; David Schwetzer,
Kiss-Ices Immigration Association.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Hirschmann at
4:15 p.m. He welcomed the representatives present, and
stated that he is not regarding those present as forming
either a formal or informal committee, but his only desire
is to get work done: and the characterization of the
meetings, of which this was the first, can be developed
later.

Romania: Mr. Schind advised the group that there are
still three Turkish boats at Constanza, and the Smyrnia, a
Greek boat, waiting to carry refugees from Constanza to
Istanbul. The last news he was to the effect that the
Smyrnia has permission to carry people from Constanza and
is now awaiting the completion of some technical details
before undertaking its voyage. The three Turkish boats are
ready to leave at any time, but in addition there are three
Bulgarian boats in Varna, the Lilea, the Vite, and the Lirin,
which likewise can be sent from Varna to Constanza to carry
people to Istanbul. The Lilea has definite permission to
leave. In Constanza, the plans for this purpose. The question now arises
as to whether or not any of the three boats should be sent
to Constanza to be kept there in the event that migration
again becomes possible. In his opinion, the Lilea
should be kept at Constanza, leaving the other two boats at Varna to
carry refugees from Bulgaria, should this become possible.
It was his view that, because of the reported uncertain
political situation in Romania, it might be well to concen-
trate there the largest number of available boats, to move
people as rapidly as opportunity afforded, in any event,
even if emigration by sea from Bulgaria should become possible,
it would take several weeks before arrangements could be
made for filling two boats, so that the third, the Lilea,
could be spared. In addition, the shipping situation in
Bulgaria is not as acute as it is in Romania, since there is
a number of small boats going to Varna each week from Istanbul,
to carry merchandise to Bulgaria.

Mr. Kaplan stated that there was some difficulty with
regard to the Smyrnia. Mr. Schind and his friends say that
the departure of the boat is dependent only upon the prepara-
tion of passenger lists. According to Mr. Zissu, it is not
possible for the Smyrnia to leave at all. Mr. Kaplan stated
that two cables had been sent to Zissu, stating that the
Smyrnia must sail, and indicating that perhaps it might be
advisable to condition any discussions concerning
the
Romanian boats upon the departure of the Smyrnia. He asked
whether it would be possible, through fresh channels, to
determine what is holding up the Smyrnia, either through
Fildermann, or through channels available to Mr. Hirschmann. It should also be determined whether the discussion of Romanian boats has any reality, or whether the entire discussion is without foundation.

In Mr. Schind's opinion, and according to information he has, it would take at least two months to put the Romanian ships in physical condition to sail to Istanbul.

Mr. Neamik stated that it is possible to send additional Turkish boats directly from Istanbul to Romania, and suggested that perhaps the Turkish minister, who had just returned to Romania, might be helpful. He foresaw no difficulties in obtaining the necessary Turkish permits for the boats to go directly to Constanta. Such boats could be made available through the same channels as are those now being used.

Discussion then ensued as to the person or agency responsible for the filling of the ships in Constanta. The discussion developed that it was entirely unclear as to whether this responsibility lay with Zissu, the Romanian Government, both together, or with the organization itself, which had prepared the boats which thus far have come from Constanta.

Mr. yplan reported that Zissu states explicitly and Fildermann in part that, after the three Turkish boats now in Constanta had left, only Romanian ships can be used for carrying refugees.

Discussion was then had as to the advisability of sending additional Turkish boats to Constanta at the present time, despite Zissu's recent concern concerning Romanian ships, on the grounds that the actual presence of additional boats might exert sufficient pressure to make them acceptable for use. No decision was taken as to this. The question then arose as to the manner in which pressure might be applied on Zissu to remove whatever obstacles he may be creating to the movement of the ships, if, indeed, he is creating any. Mr. yplan stated that he will write a strong letter to Mr. Zissu on the subject, of which a copy will be made available to Mr. Hirschmann. Mr. Hirschmann would consider whether or not, and by what means, he would attempt the same thing.

Mr. Hirschmann reported that he had written to Chargé d'Affaires Kelley concerning the Turkish ship Anadolu, which could go to Constanta if Turkish permission were received. He had asked Mr. Kelley to follow this up with the Foreign Office. It was decided that Mr. Leland and Mr. Neamik should make inquiry into the general question of sending further Turkish ships from Istanbul to Constanta with Turkish permission.

Bulgaria. Mr. Schind suggested that steps be taken to arrange for the release of people now in Bulgaria, of whom a large number are ready to depart for transport by sea to Istanbul, in the same manner as do those coming here from Romania, Turkish boats are available for this purpose, since several go to Bulgaria each week with cargo.

Mr. yplan's information is that Bulgaria does not oppose the exit of Jewish people, but that it appears that
the Turkish consul has been obstructing it. As suggested that Mr. Hirschmann have the Turkish Foreign Office inform the Consulate in Bulgaria that the Turkish government is ready to close its eyes to the fact that people arrive by ship to Turkey on route to Palestine, without being in possession of Turkish transit visas. Apparently, the Turkish Consul has informed the Bulgarian government that he opposes the departure of Jewish people to Istanbul under these circumstances. In addition, the Turkish Foreign Office should advise the Bulgarian government of its attitude concerning the arrival in Istanbul of people without Turkish transit visas.

Mr. Schwartz suggested pursuing the question of increasing land traffic from Bulgaria to Turkey by increasing from nine to twenty the number of transit visas authorized weekly for offia. An additional argument might be used on the grounds that no refugees are arriving from Hungary, for which nine visas weekly had likewise been authorized.

Mr. Hirschmann referred to the reluctance of the Bulgarian government to permit refugees to come to Istanbul on the grounds that they are subjected to too many post investigations upon their arrival here. He thought it might be helpful if assurances could be given to the Bulgarian government that no such interview would take place in Istanbul, so far as refugees are concerned.

Mr. Hirschmann stated that, in a memorandum which he had prepared for transmission to the Bulgarian government, he had suggested that priority be given to children and young people, if any, among those going from Bulgaria were permitted. He had done this in order to overcome Bulgarian objections to emigration on the grounds of too many interviews.

Mr. Schwartz opposed emigration limited to specific categories, since more people than just children and youths want to leave Bulgaria, and their departure may not be opposed.

Hungary. Mr. Kaplan reported that further clandestine movement of refugees in Hungary to Romania, according to information he had just received, depended upon finances. He, in behalf of the Jewish Agency, and Mr. Schwartz, are consulting together on this question. Mr. Schwartz indicated that finances provided no problem at the moment.

Mr. Kaplan thought it important that movement from Hungary to Romania be augmented, through strengthening of appropriate local organizations. Although Romania officially has decreed death sentence to anyone assisting such movement, in reality they apparently are willing to take no notice of it. Naturally, complications arise in Bucharest, where decision must be taken as to whether available places on boats should be given to people already in Romania or those coming from Hungary, since all are anxious to leave. Mr. Schind reported that there are already fifteen hundred Hungarian refugees in Romania who could be brought to Istanbul, were shipping facilities available.

Mr. Schind referred also to the group of six hundred Yugoslavian Jews in Hungary, who are in possession of visas for Switzerland, and which might be regarded as a group for
emigration. Apparently, a time-limit of July 1st for moving them out of Hungary has been extended to August 1st, and the matter should be followed up.

Mr. Kaplan referred to a scheme put forward by the Swedish Minister in Budapest, by which Swedish visas of a limited number and to certain categories of Jewish people might be issued, if a guarantee is provided the Swedish Government that such people would be removed from Sweden within three years' time. This matter should also be looked into and followed up.

Mr. Kaplan referred to a letter he had just received from Budapest which indicated that tens of thousands of persons could be saved if the cost of their maintenance could be taken over. He is pursuing the matter, in order to secure more information.

Mr. Birnbaum referred to his conversation with Mr. Trefet, and advised the group that the War Refuge Council, as representing the United States Government, has adopted the principle that it cannot discourage the sending of ships by individual private agencies, if they have responsible projects in hand. He had tried to concentrate all shipping questions into one channel, but apparently all necessary agreements could not be achieved.

Both Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Schwartz expressed their approval of the idea of periodic conferences similar to the present one, and felt that much good could come of these in terms of cooperation and coordination of the work. Each felt that better understanding and cooperation had been reached in behalf of their respective organizations as a result of their personal talks in Istanbul.

Mr. Birnbaum explained the presence of Mr. Schweitzer, saying that he had been invited in order to present the point of view of an outsider, that is, one who is neither Jewish agency nor Joint Distribution Committee. He will be invited to subsequent meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Herbert Katzki
Organization Representatives
Engaged in Relief and Rescue Activities
in Istanbul

The following list sets forth the agencies and their representatives in Istanbul, permanently located there.

1) Reuben Resnick represents the American Joint Distribution Committee.

   a) Directly or indirectly engaged in emigration from Turkey to Palestine or from occupied countries via Turkey to Palestine. For these purposes, it makes the necessary transportation arrangements or provides the funds therefor.

   b) Provides relief for refugees in Turkey or in occupied areas either in funds or in kind, directly and indirectly, under Treasury licenses.

   c) Provides maintenance for refugees while in transit from countries of emigration to countries of immigration.

2) Chaim Barlad represents Jewish Agency of Palestine, officially represents the Jewish agency in Turkey and is in charge of their activities in that country.

3) Mr. J. Golden heads the Palestinian office in Turkey of the Jewish Agency. Directs a special office for assisting legal emigrants to Palestine departing from or travelling via Turkey.

4) Leder, Jewish Agency, has special assignments in Turkey for the Jewish Agency.

5) Zeev Schindler, Moshe Averbuch, Yehuda Usher represent Palestine organization interested in special emigration from occupied areas to Palestine, specially matters relating to shipping.

6) Emanuel Lader, Yehuda Frower, represent Palestine organization interested in special relief assistance to people in occupied areas.

7) Jacob Griffeld represents Agudath Israel of Palestine and United States, and the Vaad HaMazalah of United States interested in assistance, emigration, and providing relief for Orthodox people in occupied areas.

8) Joseph Klarman represents the Vaad HaMazalah of the United States and Palestine organizations.

9) Ludwig Kastner represents the Vaad HaMazalah of United States and the Bratislava Jewish community.

10) David Schweitzer represents the Aid-Ica emigration association (Hicos).
11) Leon Lenenberg represents the International Rescue and Relief Committee, the Jewish Labor Committee, and is a correspondent for the New York Jewish Daily Forward, interested in relief and emigration of intellectuals, anti-Nazi refugees, scholars, etc., in occupied countries.

12) Iri Jabotinsky represents the United States Emergency Committee for the rescue of Jews in Europe, interested in the emigration of people in occupied areas.

In addition to the foregoing there were present in Ankara or Istanbul for longer or shorter periods at the end of June and first weeks of July:

13) Dr. Joseph Schwartz, European chairman of the American Joint Distribution Committee.

14) Dr. Judah Lavee of the Hebrew University, Palestine, who is a member of the Middle East Advisory Committee of the JDC.

15) Harry Vitels, a member of the Middle East Advisory Committee of the JDC.

16) Elizer Kaplan, a member of the Executive and Treasurer of the Jewish Agency.

17) IzokMitranirepresents the Bulgarian Department of the Jewish Agency.

July 10, 1944
### Immigration Statistics

**Romania:**

Number of persons who arrived in Istanbul in transit from Romania.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>January 1944</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March (1)</th>
<th>April (2)</th>
<th>May (3)</th>
<th>June</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1273 persons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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(1) n/s Kilsa (first trip) 239
Railway Total: 13

(2) n/s Maritsa (first trip) 254
n/s Bellacita 163 including 130 Transnistrian children
n/s Kilsa (second trip) 272
Railway Total: 8

(3) n/s Maritsa (second trip) 318
Railway Total: 22

Total: 240
The following is sent from Hirschmann for the WJB.

The information below is based upon preliminary investigations concerning the stoppage in May and June of refugee movements to Istanbul from Constanza.

The Hungarian authorities withdrew permission to release ships to be utilized for refugees, because of the sinking of "ANDRAZ. The Germans claimed that the tonnage was needed for military needs, and the Hungarians feared to lose any more small ships. Since the Turkish government does not desire to operate its large ships in foreign waters, a move was initiated to obtain small Turkish ships which, under an agreement between the German and Turkish governments, were engaged in carrying merchandise to Varna, Bulgaria, from Istanbul. We have been informed by the Jewish Agency that arrangements have been made by it to transport refugees on one Greek and four Turkish ships on their return voyages to Istanbul from Constanza. Following is the approximate number of persons to be accommodated on the ships now ready at Constanza for sailing: The Greek SS "ANDRAZ 1600 passengers; (AKADURA 150; "ANDRAZ 350; "ANDRAZ 250; "ANDRAZ 350.) If the above mentioned five ships, the first of which is daily expected to sail, complete their voyages successfully, there is reason to hope that these-and similar ships will follow under like conditions. In order to break the deadlock now delaying the sailing of these vessels, Jatski and I are confering with representatives of the Joint Distribution Committee and of the Jewish Agency, to have Ambassador Steinhardt's assurance that his personal understanding with Sevad Akhmat, Secretary General of the Foreign Office, will preclude any difficulty in permitting disembarkation at Istanbul for passengers without proper papers and in making arrangements for transportation to Palestine via Turkey.

The reorganization of the control of the Rumanian Government over this so-called illegal transportation is an additional factor causing the delay in the movements of the above-mentioned ships. According to information which we have received, an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Immigration has been established in the Rumanian Government and among representatives of several departments of the Government is included one Jewish representative, Zisman, reportedly a rich man and a close friend of Ion Antonescu. The formation of this new Committee has interrupted previously made arrangements for securing the exit permits of people leaving Rumania are required to have. It evidently required an interim period in order to establish new contacts. Reportedly, children and adults over 45 are to be permitted by the Rumanians to leave the country and this plan has allegedly been accepted by the Germans. Many refugees have come from Holland to Rumania illegally, and some from Hungary are now arriving.

Of the 2600 refugees mentioned above, an appreciable number will be children who, due to the efforts of the WRB in March of this year, were released from Transnistria.

Schwartz in Ankara has been informed of the details. It is recommended by Ambassador Steinhardt and me that the program which was proposed in your 64 be adopted with joint participation in the responsibility by the WRB, since our
The Bulgarian government stands today in the position where it can create a priceless measure of good will without, as I see it, giving up anything fundamental, by taking the essential steps without delay to abrogate the scandalous anti-Jewish laws and to permit us to announce it forthrightly to the world. Whatever sacrifice on its own part is necessary at this time for it to do so, I am confident that the scales will weigh heavily in its own favor after the decision is announced.

I have promised Kalsbanoff and you that such a step would be heralded with the widest publicity throughout the United States (and Britain), which I shall take it as my especial task to discharge. The evidence in the instance of the abolition of the camp in Transnistria by the Romanians is with you. The step I am suggesting would elicit publicity and good will of a manifold nature and scope.

There is another aspect of the subject which we discussed and which should be re-enforced with the Bulgarians. It is my sense that this may well be no time for planning large-scale emigration movements out of a country like Bulgaria if the present government of Bulgaria is as sound and forward-looking in its determination to reconstruct its country as is indicated. The Jews who have been reduced by these two lines to complete deprivation and inability to carry on any legitimate work must be put on their feet, not for themselves alone as Bulgarian citizens, but for the enormous contribution that they will make in helping build the new Bulgaria. It is a strange paradox which history relates that the depressed and depleted Jewish populations here without exception rebounded in the countries where they found themselves and became valuable citizens in building the wealth and culture of their communities. Considering the history of Bulgaria, the Jews as an indigenous part of that nation, received relatively fair treatment which they enjoyed until recently when this latter record was smudged by one of the blackest pages in Bulgarian history. With any fair chance at economic assistance, rehabilitation and sustenance, the Jewish people should quickly become essential and useful participants in building the new nation.

Why send them in laggard groups to strange lands if, as the minister of their country asserts, they will “gradually” find themselves back in the position of respect and responsibility where they were before the war. It may even be that the Bulgarian Government some months hence may find itself in the position of beckoning for the return of these self-same citizens whom they helped to deport to Palestine at great a pain and inconvenience. I trust that you are not burdened by any overemphasis of the point, but I insist that the step we are suggesting will be of even greater advantage to Bulgaria than to those who will be saved.

One more point. I think the leaders of the Bulgarian Government should know that I shall expect to hold them responsible for that which Kalsbanoff signed. While he wrote somewhat less than he reported to me verbally, his letter is categoric in asserting that (a) the government will annulate
the situation of the Jews and cease all forms of persecution without delay; (b) transport will be facilitated within all possible technical means. The letter goes further in its implications, but speaking for the War Refugee Board I repeat that we shall never be satisfied with these conversations and representations until these two laws are revoked. In the meanwhile the government can be completely lax in its enforcement of them.

Nor will this be sufficient: Reports coming currently from Turkey indicate a state of economic depravity on the part of its Jewish citizens resulting from these laws. What is the good of permitting people freely to leave their homes if they have nowhere to go, nor means of securing funds except by immoral and illegal means; if there are no possible available methods of reconstructing their lot or their dignity as human beings? Measures must be found at once to supply them with food, the necessary means of living as decent citizens, and economic assistance to rehabilitate their businesses, their families and their homes.

I propose to offer through the assistance of existing relief agencies, now represented in Turkey, along with that of our government, such means to rehabilitate this population as possibilities permit. Obviously it is not too much to ask that the Bulgarian government permit this and assist it in every possible reasonable way. They have decimated the population, do not ask them to revive it but only to permit others to do so without let or hindrance so that they may contribute towards the wellbeing of their own country.

I hope to hear that the forthright and sincere steps suggested herein have been taken by the Bulgarian government in order to fortify its position among the humane nations of the world and to win back the respect and good will of the people which they had so scrupulously built in the last half-century and which they have so sorely lost in the last black war-years.

With thanks for your kindness and friendship,

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attaché

P.S. If the Bulgarian government is seeking methods to demonstrate its sincerity in being helpful in this situation connected with refugee movements, we are informed that a number of refugees, possibly up to 2,000, will be leaving Turkey in the next few days. We have requested of the Rumanian government that they permit these refugees to enter Rumania in transit and we have been informed that the Rumanians have agreed in principle to this procedure. Obviously the Bulgarians would not at this time wish to set up a blockade against these refugees in the face of their representations. It will therefore be necessary for them to agree to permit
these refugees to come through Bulgaria and to provide for them the necessary transit facilities out of Bulgaria to Turkey without delay. The above will apply similarly to refugees who will be leaving Humala (who do not arrive from Hungary), and for whom transit facilities through Bulgaria will be required.

I.A.H.

Dr. Floyd H. Black
President
Robert College
Hissar
"I wish to inform you that an inter-ministerial commission has been constituted since the beginning of the month of May, under my chairmanship, for the purpose of organizing officially and efficiently the emigration of the Jews. During the sessions of this commission Messrs. Fischer, Leidermann and Zimmer, the representatives of the Jews of Roumania, have been consulted, as well as the Commissioner for Jewish Affairs. These persons have jointly established the practical means for organizing the Jewish emigration, either with the help of medium-size ships flying a foreign flag (which have recently effected transports), or with ships of greater tonnage that the Service Maritime Agency may charter to that effect.

"The decision of the government has been officially communicated to the Swiss, Swedish, Turkish, Portuguese Legations; to the Delegates of the International Red Cross Committee; as well as to His Eminence the Apostolic Nuncio at Bucharest.

"The inter-ministerial commission is in full activity. I hope that the International organizations, which have dealt with the question of the Jewish emigration, will assist in giving their full support."
Copy of telegram dated July 18, 1944, addressed to the Rumanian Legation, Lisbon

Three days ago a ship, flying a neutral flag, left Constanza having on board a large number of Jewish refugees. Three other vessels, which are in the port of Constanza will follow.

Several months ago the question of obtaining a German guarantee for the safe passage of a neutral vessel in the Black Sea was raised, but negotiations were suspended.

A ministerial committee, over which I preside, is handling the question of Jewish emigration and is examining the possibility of facilitating the departure of the emigrants by using Rumanian ships.

Mr. Wildermann, Mr. Zissu (Jewish Central) and the Commissioner General for Jewish questions discussed the matter with me several times.

I beg you to refute all false information circulating with respect to Mr. Wildermann's case. The latter enjoys full freedom and is collaborating with the Jewish Central, with a view of organizing, together with Mr. Zissu, the emigration of refugees.

Mr. Wildermann's son, who has been in France since the outbreak of the war, has apparently been deported to Poland. I have personally intervened on his behalf with the German Government and was promised that he would be set at liberty.

(signed) Mihai Antonescu
July 21, 1944

Dear Dr. Zissu:

I am taking the liberty of writing to you on behalf of the victims of the war who are desperately seeking refuge from Hungary. I understand that you are devoting efforts to assisting them, and in this respect we have a common interest.

May I identify myself as the special representative of the War Refugee Board of the United States of America. This board was created in January 1944 by a special order of President Roosevelt and consists of the Secretaries of State, War and Treasury of the United States. Our orders are to initiate and assist in the rescue of people who are seeking havens of refuge, wherever and whenever they may be.

As of this date and by virtue of the powers vested in me by my Government, and with the cooperation of existing relief agencies such as the United States Joint Distribution Committee, the Palestine Jewish Agency and others, we have had some partial success.

I am informed that the Hungarian government is not opposed but in fact is helping to facilitate, through its Ministerial Committee, the transportation of refugees from Hungary via sea, and that following the successful voyage of the S.S. 'Melitopol' there are four additional vessels now prepared to embark. Our Government is watching with great interest the plans for the quick movement of these vessels, and may urge that nothing be done to obstruct the immediate embarkation of these four ships, as well as the movement of other ships whether they carry a Hungarian flag or any other flag, provided passes are arranged without delay.

The ideal situation that could be created would be a so-called 'bridge of ships' at this time, which would contemplate not only the Hungarian ships, which we understand you can be instrumental in organizing without delay, but other ships, so that a constant flow of refuge traffic may continue without interruption during these months, when every day is critical for those whose salvation we have at heart.

I am also informed that there have arisen a number of questions regarding those who should be chosen to make these voyages to safe havens. In this connection, may I say that it is not the province of my Government to make or influence such determinations. The bases for these choices are not our special concern. We are deeply interested, however, in not permitting this question in any of its aspects to interfere with the prompt embarkation of these and additional ships by even so much as a single hour. You undoubtedly are more conscious of the acuteness and danger of the situation for these innocent citizens than we can be from here, and you will forgive me for emphasizing a sin the essential importance of not permitting anything, especially of jurisdictional or technical nature, to stand in the way of the immediate release of these vessels.
July 21, 1944

Pursuant to my previous conversation with Dr. Black and the memorandum dated July 13, 1944, which I handed to him covering the background of the successful liaison between Croats and the Bulgarian Government and myself, and the request for similar assistance of the Bulgarian Government for the release of Jewish refugees, Dr. Black visited me and reported as follows:

1. He had reason to know that I would be given favorable news through Balabanoff, the Bulgarian Minister, when I meet him within the next few days.

2. That Balabanoff has made the request to see me.

3. That in his recent visit to Sofia he was informed of a reversal of the policy of the Bulgarian Government with regard to minorities and Jews and that he would seek every possible means of winning our good will through efforts connected with the release of refugees.

I was informed that the head of the police in Bulgaria issued a statement (not public) in which he stated that the Government will facilitate all police permits necessary for the release of refugees.

In the latter connection it is important to remember that while the Bulgarian Government may approve the release of refugees from Bulgaria, enormous complexities of a technical nature will interfere. Six different types of permits are required before a person may leave the country. They are: tax, military, police, etc. In normal times these permits were available at Government headquarters which were centered in Sofia. Since the severe bombing of Sofia the Government offices have been moved to various cities, and it is necessary for a citizen to travel considerably to secure the certificates. In addition, many of the forms have been lost in the bombing and the moving. There will be much obstruction and delay in any authorization for citizens to leave the country. In addition, transportation facilities are strained to the utmost, also due to the bombing, and it will be a difficult matter for evacuees to reach Kars, the one possible port of debarkation.

The best possible solution is for children to be given priority and placed on the boats and trains. They will not require certificates of release. It is possible in this connection that parents may not be willing to separate themselves from the children, especially since the announcement has been made that no further personal or physical persecutions will take place in Bulgaria. There are, however, hundreds of children who are without parents or homes who should be corralled and sent by boat and rail to Istanbul and Palestine.

In my proposed conversation with Balabanoff I am to request of him that.
I am confident that, in your broad humanitarian efforts (which will be remembered long after these difficult days have passed) you will manage to bring into your councils on a productive and a cooperative level, the services which Mr. Hildesmann can render with skill and effectiveness. Mr. Hildesmann is also regarded with deep respect by the great agencies operating in the rescue field, as well as by the representatives of the Government of the United States. Certainly, it would be unfortunate not to utilize fully his experience, sincerity and representative power.

Again may I offer my assurance of our high regard for your efforts in the field of human welfare at this crucial time in the history of all peoples, but especially for the minorities and the Jews, who are suffering so sorely.

Faithfully yours,

I. L. Hirschmann
Special Attaché
United States of America

P.S. I have just read a copy of the letter from Mr. W. Kaplan of July 17 addressed to you and wish to assert that I subscribe completely with the views expressed by him.
Dear Dr. Black:

Pursuant to our conversations I am confirming several of the points which were concurred in by you and me in our discussions relating to efforts to rescue victims of persecution and oppression in Bulgaria.

The conversations with and reports from Balabanoff for his government were encouraging as first possible steps. His letter written to me on behalf of the government, which has been transmitted to Washington, is confirmatory of the above. But I believe that you will agree with me that the Bulgarian government is not going far enough at this crucial hour on these matters. I am thoroughly convinced that the government will take whatever possible steps are available to expedite the release, within technical possibilities, of the citizens who happen to be Jews. From information at hand, confirmed by you and Balabanoff, these steps at this time can result in only a pitifully small emancipation.

I am bothered by two aspects of this problem: a) that few refugees will be able to leave Bulgaria in the next important weeks and months; b) that the War Refugee Board, watching daily for specific acts of large refugee movements out of Bulgaria, will have no choice but to interpret these negative results as a breach of faith by the Bulgarian government in the face of its verbal and written representations by Balabanoff.

Considering the acute political situation today, the desire expressed by Balabanoff for his government to make such moves which would win the good will of the United States Government and its people, we stand today in a position where the fortuitous first steps in a program which could be productive of good on all sides could be unprofitably misconstrued. I therefore write to you today the proposal which I believe is that you will agree with me that the Bulgarian Government without delay; namely, concrete steps to revoke and abolish forthwith the two notorious anti-Jewish laws on its books, in asserting the above I am not unaware of certain technical and political obstacles which the government in Bulgaria today may find it necessary to overcome. But these are days when I presume to suggest that governments will persist only by bold and forthright steps, especially with relation to the onward sweep of Allied victory, and if they wish to find themselves in some measure of good grace at the conference table.

As you know, I have no authority to speak in connection with the latter, but I am charged with a special responsibility and can offer now a specific opening for the good will that will result from bold strokes in the direction of humanitarianism, especially as related to refugees, which will not promise but fulfill a policy which will negate that of a former government in ruthlessly corrupting a helpless minority of its own people, and which will be designed concretely to rehabilitate these victimized members of its own citizenship.
1. We should give me in writing a statement of the present attitude of the Bulgarian Government on the question of minorities and Jews;

2. Information concerning Dragashoff's recent meeting with the Jewish authorities and his statement, by understanding is that they are to be treated like all Bulgarian citizens within the framework of the Bulgarian law which still contains the two anti-Jewish laws which are severe and which reduce the Jews to economic pariahs;

3. He will state the position of the Bulgarian Government regarding its willingness to permit Jewish refugees to leave the country.

I will request of Lalabanoff that he authorize me to send a specific telegram with his own quotation on the above suggestions, and also inform him of my intention to utilize this for good will for the present Bulgarian Government in our own Government and for publicity to our people in the United States.

Arrangements should be made for me to see Lalabanoff during Simon's absence in Switzerland.

I. A. IRSCHBANZ
EXHIBIT K

Composition of the Exchange Group which arrived in Istanbul 6/7/44.

From ELVAS-BILBAO 222 persons (72 men and 150 women)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>31</td>
</tr>
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<td>61-70</td>
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<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-80</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nationality

- Holland 99
- Without nationality 76
- Poland 10
- Russia 1
- Palestine 2
- Divers 34

Total 222

From VITTEL 61 persons.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Group of children under children's emigration scheme: 46

Number of families: 88

Total: 131
EXHIBIT I

Part I

Survey of Events

On March 30, 1944, the German authorities ordered the establishment of the Central Council of Jews in Hungary, and named the members thereof. They issued instructions that the Jews might not change their place of residence, travel, nor move within the confines of Budapest.

The first anti-Jewish proclamations on behalf of the Hungarian government appeared on March 30, when Jews were forbidden to employ non-Jewish domestic servants, without distinction as to the age of the members of the household or the domestics. Further orders provided for the immediate striking of the names of Jewish public officials, entertainers, and journalists from their respective professional associations, the exclusion of lawyers from the bar, within two months, as well as the wearing of a yellow star ten centimeters in diameter on the outer clothing (firmly sewed on). All these orders were enacted on strictly racial grounds, and permitted only very infrequent exceptions for meritorious service in the war.

On April 5, the day on which the Jewish badge was to be worn for the first time, those members of the above-mentioned categories of exceptions, as well as baptized Jews married to Aryans, were exempted from wearing the star, as well as from most of the restrictions connected therewith. The vehicles, telephones, and radios of the Jews were taken away.

Even those Jews who, because of their military distinction, had not lost their rank, were not exempted from wearing the star—strict instructions were given on this point—and were forbidden to wear their uniforms.

On April 7 appeared the decree forbidding Jews to travel, after which they had no right to use automobiles, and could not even ride in public conveyances without police permission.

On April 14 appeared the decree withdrawing druggists' licenses.

On April 16 all Jewish fortunes were confiscated. Valuable objects and securities were to be deposited. Permission was given to take 1,000 Pengo monthly out of the blocked accounts.

On April 21 Jewish shops were ordered closed, their furnishings and stocks were confiscated. Aryans were appointed to head a few businesses whose continuance was held to be in the public interest.

On April 22 a government decree constituted the Union of Hungarian Jews, in place of the Central Council of Jews appointed by the German authorities.

On April 23 food rations for Jews were diminished. The sugar ration was decreased from 1040 gr. to 300 gr. monthly, and there were no exceptions—pregnant and nursing mothers, as well as infants, receive the same ration, whereas these
The categories among the non-Jews are able to get many times the normal ration. Instead of fat, the Jews receive 300 cr. asans oil per capita monthly, and even Jewish heavy laborers receive no supplements. The weekly meat ration of the Jews is 100 cr. deer or horse-meat, pork and veal are simply not to be bought. Milk is given only to pregnant women, infants and children under three years of age, but even here the amount is less than that of the non-Jews. According to the decree the Jews do not get their respective portions on Sundays from the milk station.

On April 22, the dismissal of Jews from academic posts was ordered. The dismissal is to be accomplished by the end of May, with the exception of a few persons acknowledged to be economically important.

On April 27 appeared the decree designating the homes and places of residence of the Jews. Even before this, after Budapest was bombed, Jewish dwellings had been requisitioned. The Central Council had to provide 500 lodgings within 24 hours. The Jews were charged with turning their brothers out of doors within a few hours, and those dislodged in this manner were compelled to leave all their furniture behind in their homes, as well as the bed and table linen required by those moving in. When it appeared that 500 dwellings did not stand ready for disposal at the stated time, it was ordered that 500 more dwellings be handed over within 24 hours, and two members of the Jewish Council were taken into custody; they were forced to sit in one spot with their faces turned to the wall until the Jewish community handed over the keys to the 1,000 dwellings.

The decree provided the basis for the sending away of Jews from towns with less than 10,000 population, and the creation of ghettos in cities with over 10,000 population.

On the same day permission to carry weapons was taken away from the Jews.

On April 30 appeared a decree on "safeguarding Hungarian Cultural Life from the works of Jewish authors", in accordance with which the works of Jewish writers had to be taken out of libraries and public libraries and destroyed.

On the same day a review was ordered of the distinction earned during the occupation following the former world war.

On May 2 Jews were forbidden to visit public baths.

On May 6 the profit-bringing licenses, such as shopkeepers' licenses and tavern licenses were taken away from the Jews. Since these licenses had already been taken away by earlier decree, this new prohibition fell on those categories which had previously been exempted, that is, those who acquired merit in the war, war-widows and orphans, as well as those baptized Jews who, on account of the new degrees on racial grounds, were now accounted Jews.

On May 13 the categories of exceptions from the anti-Jewish decrees were revised, after which the various orders permitted only very rare exceptions. In consequence of these new regulations the only exceptions were for those of great military importance, 75% war-invalids, counter-revolutionary activities, e.
fitting behavior during the occupation (after the first world war), while baptized Jews married to Aryans were exempted only from wearing the badge, from the prohibition against traveling, and from the prohibition against employing Aryan servants.

On May 20 the premises of a few Jewish entrepreneurs were also closed (hairdressers, inns, restaurants, hotels, garages, etc.).

On the same day Jews were forbidden to visit inns, restaurants, cafes, and amusement parks, with the exception of certain specified places.

The seizure of Jews had already begun on March 19, without any kind of decree which would have forbidden traveling, every Jew who appeared at the station, whether going on a journey or arriving from one, was arrested and taken to jail and from there to the camp Hiaitnica. About 2000 persons were interned in this way; they were crowded into the Hiaitnica internment camp which was intended for about 800 persons, and which already had earlier inmates, so that the overwhelming majority of the men lay on bare ground, and in individual barracks there was no even space to lie down. On account of the fact that in a few days the people became lousy, everyone was shaved and disinfected. The commandant of the camp did his best to improve it, but the overcrowding of the camp vitiated these exertions.

Children under 16 years old were let out of the camp, together with their mothers and pregnant women, as well as women over 55 and men over 65 years old. The remainder stayed under arrest, without any regard to whether they had wanted to fly the country, were going to work, or simply went to the station to meet someone.

On May 20, 250 prominent Jews were arrested, who were taken first to the building of the Rabbinic Seminary, and later to Hiaitnica. From this time on the building of the Rabbinic Seminary was a collection camp. Here the Central Council of Jews had to collect those to be arrested, the list of whose names was given out from time to time by the authorities. To this category belonged various journalists excluded from their associations, about 300 lawyers, and countless other people summoned for one reason or another—for example, after denunciation. They were interned without determining whether they were guilty or innocent.

The man-hunt in the streets began. Jews were interned without rhyme or reason, under the most diverse circumstances. The order on the wearing of the yellow star left room for doubt as to whether it was also to be worn in offices and shops. During the first two days, those who were found in these places without the star were taken to jail and fined; later they were interned. All those who, later, were picked up on the street, were interned on the ground that they were either not wearing the star, or not wearing it according to the regulations.

A few German soldiers broke into shops and homes and simply arrested those who resisted them.
Politicians, prominent persons, and those who played a part in public affairs, were taken into custody and held in custody in most varied places (in the cellar of the Hotel Astoria, in the Royal Academy of Science, in the prison of the courthouse of the budapest region, in the schwabensch, etc.). Later a camp was set up on the island gosol; at present there are five such camps. People are interned in there as well as in three other camps in budapest which previously had served for refugees.

Since the jews hospital was confiscated for an SS camp hospital, the patients had to be taken to two charity hospitals. It ever happened that those sent by the doctor to the hospital were brought back into the camp by the authorities without another medical examination.

On April 15 began the internment of the refugees still at large. Those visitors who appeared at the police station for the monthly prolongation of their residence permits were simply arrested there and brought to the camp. Later they began to arrest foreigners in their homes.

English and American jews were brought to a separate jail.

The travel-prohibition explicitly stated that it was not forbidden to ride on the interurban trains or the streets. Believing this, the Jews from the outskirts of budapest rode calmly to their places of work and back, and on certain days these, too, were arrested and taken away.

Along about the last days of March there began the internments throughout the length of the land. The overwhelming majority of those Jews prominent in public affairs, as well as those who concerned themselves with political life, were interned. The reasons given for the internment were that it was to be understood that those concerned listened to foreign broadcasts or were engaging themselves in Communist propaganda activities. This was also the excuse given in the case of orthodox rabbis. The number of those interned was between two or three thousand.

These internees were taken to jail, as well as to camps in Germany, Caucasus, Bucharest, Bacstopolya and Ujazdowoj.

The deportation of internees began on April 28, on which day 1,170 persons from kisaraca, 400 from the jail, and 214 refugees from the building of the rabbinical seminary were transported. This transport consisted of men and women between 16 and 80.

On the same day those persons between 16 and 60 were deported from the camp in nagykanisz, as well as the whole camp of Bacstopolya. The transport from nagykanisz consisted of at least 3,000 persons, that from Bacstopolya of about 1,000 persons.

The concentration of Hungarian jews began on April 16, 1944. Everywhere and always it occurred in the same manner. First, the precipitate concentration in the ghettos, then after continuing deterioration of conditions, the concentration in brickyards, in courtyards without water on bare ground.
the plundering of all material possessions of the Jews, and then brutal questionings, accompanied by gross bodily mistreatment to find out where valuable objects were hidden, and lastly deportation: 70 people in one railroad car, with one bucket of water as provision for the journey. I cannot describe in detail the progress of concentration in all places, although the data are at hand, but we will give a brief account of the short life of a few characteristic concentration camps.

**Syriargyaza**

April 16. To Syriargyaza, and Simapusta 12 kilometers away, were brought the Jews from communities in Syriargyaza itself, 4130 Jews already there, and 5623 from the surrounding country, that is, 10,753 persons, were crowded together in 123 houses. The floorspace of these 123 houses, counting kitchens and halls as well, amounted to about 9665 square meters, so that each person did not have so much as a square meter to himself. According to orders, each person could take with him, in addition to the clothes on his back, two sets of underclothing and a packet of 50 kilograms, which had to hold food for two weeks. Unfortunately the Jews in the provinces were driven together so suddenly by the gendarmes, that they could take nothing with them at all. An example is the case of the Jews from Syrbator, who were taken to Simapusta. On April 21, Friday night at 11 o'clock, they were taken from their homes by strange gendarmes, and at about 1 or 2 o'clock at night were loaded in farm-carts out of other villages and brought to Simapusta with great brutality.

**Day 1.** The situation has strikingly deteriorated. From those streets designated as the ghetto in Syriargyaza the people were brought to Simapusta, where the arrangements for provisions are very bad. They requested covers, straw sacks, and especially straw, so that at least they can protect the old and the sick from lying on the bare ground.

**Day 5.** Those Jews from the surrounding country concentrated in Syriargyaza were brought from the city to the farm of Baron Loinar, where they were put into frightfully crowded tobacco barns. In the whole place there was only a single well, 150 meters' distance from the camp, where the people could come and go to get water only when accompanied by a gendarme. The most pitiful part, however, is that the inhabitants of Syriargyaza itself, who after gross ill-treatment were placed in the ghetto, which they had almost completely furnished, were forced on account of the new decree to leave it.

**Day 7.** In early dawn the camp at Syriapospata, like the one in Simapusta, was surrounded by gendarmes, so that from now on nobody can come near the camp. The people are starving, every day they get 100 grams of bread and as many beans. They have no money, and only those clothes which they have on.

**Day 8.** The transporting from Syriargyaza keeps on. Most of the members of the Jewish Council and the front-fighters are now there. In Syriapospata there are still 8665 people, crowded together in the space of a few square meters. Treatment is like that in the concentration camp. The camp is all the more unbearable, because the only well is beginning to get fouled. The water shortage in Simaposta is even greater than in Syrijes. Today the camp at Karonodspusta is beginning to be filled.
May 10. The transportation by harangpustas goes on. The capacity of the tobacco barn there is not greater than 5000 persons, but on May 10 they brought there a large number of people in conditions of dangerous overcrowding. The camp has absolutely no water, since the attempt to dig a well was unsuccessful. Although the authorities allowed the bringing of urgent necessities, the gendarmes took all necessities away from the people at the entrance of the camp, even the greater part of the food. In the camps of Kiszapusta, Zalajupos and Ajirejes, the daily food ration per person is 100 gr. bread, 100 gr. potatoes, and 10 gr. oil.

May 10. Monday in the early morning hours the first 3,300 people, among them old people, invalids, infants, pregnant women, were put 70 per car into railroad cars with gross bodily ill-treatment, the surrounding population kept completely at a distance, to go to an "unknown destination".

May 12. In the early morning we learned by telephonic report that the number of those shipped off is over 6,000. There are no longer concentration camps in Ajirejes and harangpustas, in Kiszapusta there are still 760 people, in Ajiregyhaza there are only the members of the Jewish Council left.

May 23. Even the 760 Jews from Ajiregyhaza left in Kiszapusta were taken away in railroad cars.

June 6. Through a telephone conversation with the police we learned that all Jews from Ajiregyhaza and the surrounding "pustas" are already taken away, among them also the Chief Rabbi Dr. Nala Bernstein.

June 26. The Jews from Bankas, about 15,000 souls, were confined to 12 alleys. The Jews belonging to the council from Bereg, about 20,000 of them, were concentrated in the brickyards of Hallus and Sajovics. Since they could take neither money nor food with them, the camp is pitiful and catastrophic.

July 1. The German soldiers broke into the ghetto, during which many lives were sacrificed. Lord cases of three cases of typhus. On account of shortages of medicine and food, the camp is horrible. One doctor and one engineer committed suicide.

July 9. Two members of the Jewish Council were shot, the others seriously ill-treated.

July 14. The situation in the ghetto in the city, and especially in the two brickyards, has markedly deteriorated since Sunday morning. The Jewish functionaries and the Jewish auxiliary police were forbidden to leave the ghetto. In the camps, which heretofore had been allowed. The brickyards were surrounded by camp police, and with this begins the transportation of those concentrated there. Families were not separated, employables and unemployables were put into railroad cars under the most dreadful circumstances, accompanied by terrible atrocities. On Monday fresh transport was sent on its way. The number of the members of the Jewish Council was reduced from 12 to 6.
May 18. The larger camp, where approximately 13,000 persons were crowded together, was completely emptied by Wednesday, after the transportation which began on Sunday. The transport—70 to 80 persons per car—was sent in the direction of Kaasa. Those transported might take nothing with them, their better clothes were taken off them, and each railroad car had only two buckets of water. Those Jews, tormented to death, tried to break out of the car in various ways, and 30 of them luckily lost their lives in this way. The smaller camp was also liquidated. Those persons brought from Lomaz to the ghetto number 7,000. The Jews from Lomaz, who were brought to the ghetto, were transferred under difficult conditions to the empty bigger camp early in the morning of the 17th. The circumstances of the transfer were so brutal, that some persons attacked the police with knives. Thereby five Jews lost their lives. Those belonging to the categories of exceptions, even those doctors transferred here from the Ministry of the Interior, underwent the same fate.

May 20. We received the following shattering information: "Lomaz, Lomaz, Lomaz are empty. The Jews were all transported away."

Haggyvarad.

May 3. In the very early morning the ghetto placarded appeared, and already at 5 o'clock in the morning a detective accompanied by a policeman took all valuables from the Jews, and gave them 15 to 30 minutes to pack the most necessary clothes, bed-linen and provisions for 14 days. In one room 10 to 15 persons were crowded together, the windows on the street were boarded up, the ghetto was surrounded.

May 11. The guard on the surrounded ghetto was strengthened on the 10th. The police on duty there were replaced by gendarmes, so that it was impossible to approach the ghetto. As an indication of the strictness of the watch, those streets, one side of which belonged to the ghetto, such as for example Kertesz, Szanovszky and Kapuinus Avenue, were watched by the gendarmes, who allowed the Christian inhabitants to go only on the sidewalk. Those so-called rich Jews, or those considered rich, were without exception arrested. They found themselves under arrest in the police station, in the gendarmerie of the city, where they had to undergo devilish treatment. Through this means they tried to get them to tell where they had hidden their alleged valuables. The Jewish council was likewise arrested.

May 24. The "little ghetto", where the Jews from the surrounding country were concentrated, is now completely emptied. The people, tormented half to death, were put into railroad cars, 70 each. The large ghetto was more strictly surrounded and the anguish continued.

May 25. The imprisonment continues, Haggyvarad is empty of Jews.

Kassa.

April 29. Eleven streets were assigned to the Jews of Kassa as a ghetto. On the 30th of April these were reduced to three. Finally, however, the greater part of the Jews of Kassa...
- o-

massa were taken and placed in the brickyard.

May 2. The fate of the 12,000 Jews in the brickyard is catastrophic. Women, children, and old men are, indeed, sheltered under a roof in a drying-room of the brickyard, but the poor people, deprived of all their possessions, cannot be protected there, as the drying-rooms have no sidewalls. Since the deportees had to leave their homes, which later were completely plundered, very suddenly, they came to the brickyard without the barest necessities and without provisions. Only 30 per cent of the deportees had provisions. Drinking water was brought once daily in the city supply carts.

May 3. From a true old friend, a prominent personality, we received the following letter: "For some hours I am out of the horrors. The community kitchen needed me for a certain work, and I came out for a short time. I am afraid I cannot stand it for long, for we are suffering beyond description. We lie in the dust, have neither straw-mattresses nor covers, and will freeze to death. The place is sealed, I do not see any way out. Do not send us anything, we don't get it anyway. For some days we still have something to eat, how it will be later on, only God knows. There are about 15,000 persons here. The community kitchen now gives us, after long waiting in line, a sort of soup-liquor, but who will continue to support this institution? The community won't be able to do so. I have not eaten for days, and hope in this way to shorten my way. We are so neglected, that we do not look human any more. There is no possibility for cleaning anything. We have not taken off our clothes since coming here. Best greetings to you all, pray for us that we shall die soon."

May 15. The first eight barracks of the camp were emptied. With that began the last stage of the suffering of the Jews from massa. First 4,600 persons were put into railroad cars. The men and boys were completely undressed under the open sky, in front of the cars, so that they might hide nothing. The women and girls were examined in the same way by the gendarmes in the barracks. The four weeks of concentration have so completely ruined our brothers, that eight of them died when put into the cars. In each car were put, with terrifying brutality, 70 to 80 persons.

May 18. The evacuation is going on. The concentration camp was completely cut off from the outer world by the gendarmes and policemen. Even the members of the Jewish Council were not allowed to approach the camp.

May 20. In the evening, at 6 o'clock, the members of the Jewish Council were arrested. Those Christians who helped the Jews in some way were also put into cars and taken away together with the Jews.
June 7. In Ansa there are no more Jews. In the same or similar circumstances the whole Jewish population of Hungary, with the exception of Budapest, was concentrated. During the next days the orders relative to Budapest were made public, and there was no doubt what fate was in store for the last city in Hungary which up to that time was not yet subject to concentration. At that time the following cities were completely empty of Jews: Láznéka, Ungvar, Beregszasz, Nagyszollos, Ausztr, Haramarosziget, Nagyvarad, Nagybenya, Besszterce, Kolozsvár, Szamos, Szatmarnemeti, Tata, Rozsalka, Kőszeg, Maros, Svatopölfa, Oyvidek, Szabadka, Zenta, Zombor, Lurcsó, Gyongyos, Satoraljauchely, Barosszat, Sallagymoló, Összeregen, Ósziszentesgörgy, Teso, Araslatina, Nagykerely, Belsővar, Nagykanisza, Ansa, Jás, Gyiregháza, Kisszeg.

The population of the following cities, together with the Jewish population of the surrounding country, was concentrated in ghettos and will be deported in the next few days: Komárom, Gyor, Araslat, Kisszeg, Tótváros.

There follow the statistics on our brothers deported from each individual city:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcarpathia</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Láznéka</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungvar</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beregszasz</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagyszollos</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ausztr</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haramaroszi-</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tótváros</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesó</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Araslatina</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jás</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>106,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transylvania</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nagybenya</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Besszterce</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolozsvár</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szamos</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagyvarad</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jás</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szamosmolyo</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Összeregen</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Összentesgyory</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94,000</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper Hungary</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ansa</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satoraljauchely,</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barosszat</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyongos</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Upper Teschen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Souls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ujraszyhaza</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisvarda</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szatarnemetli</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagykaroly</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>75,000 souls</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### South Hungary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Souls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nagykanisza</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saja</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saros</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szentopolya</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ujvidek, Szabad-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa, Zenca, Som-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bor, Murakoz</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>25,000 souls</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the 15th of May to the 10th of June, there were in all 255,000 Jews deported from Hungary.
On the basis of reliable information, 90% of the Jews deported from Hungary were taken to Auschwitz in Upper Silesia.

"We are in possession of an exact description of the extermination camp, Auschwitz. From our detailed protocol relative to this, which is well authenticated and confirmed from several sources, we are only giving a short extract. The protocol was taken word for word from the deposition of two young Slovakian Jews. One of them was taken on April 13, 1942, from the concentration camp at Auschwitz and from there to Birkenau, and the other came on June 16, 1942, from the camp near Lomsky to Lublin, and from there to Birkenau and later to Auschwitz. These two deported Slovakian Jews succeeded, after long preparation and superhuman exertions, in escaping, and they are now in neutral territory.

"In Auschwitz we were brought directly to a big barrack. On one side of the barrack we had to strip and give up our clothes and valuables. In this state we went to a neighboring barrack, where after being completely shorn we were disinfected with Lysol. Each one received a number upon leaving the barrack. The numbers began at 25,000. With this number in our hands we were driven to a third barrack, where, as a sign of our admission, the number was tattooed on the left breast in the most brutal manner. From there we were driven, a hundred at a time, into a cellar, and then again into a barrack, where we received the clothes of convicts and wooden shoes. These clothes were taken from us on the same afternoon, and we received old ragged Russian uniforms. Thus we were brought to Birkenau.

"The camp commandant of Auschwitz supervised the work camp of Birkenau and Barnaus, the small farm of the camp. The prisoners were provided with consecutive numbers according to their entry into the camp. At the time of our escape, in the beginning of April, 1944, these numbers amounted to 180,000. Later the numbers were tattooed on the left foot. Although the treatment of the..."
of the prisoners was the same for all, still they were differentiated according to nationality and category of the "crime", by means of different colored triangles with different letters on their outer clothing. (Sufficient details are to be found in the original protocol.)

On the grounds of the camp at Auschwitz are the workshops of the G.A. (German Armament Corps), of the firms of "Rupp" and "Siegmund", a large factory of the "Buna" under construction. Here many of the prisoners work.

"The actual grounds of the camp cover a surface of 500 by 300 meters, surrounded by a double row of concrete pillars and high tension wires. Between the two fences, about 150 meters apart, there are watch-towers about five meters high, which are provided with machine-guns and searchlights. In front of the inner electric fence goes an ordinary wire fence. Any disturbance even at this fence is answered by firing from the watch-towers. This system of guarding is called the 'little chain of posts'. The camp itself consists of three rows of houses. Across from these stands the big chain of posts, which surrounds the whole camp in a circle of about two kilometers, with watch-towers 150 meters apart. On the camp grounds, between the little and the big chain of posts are the various workshops and labor areas. The little chain of posts is guarded only at night, and at the same time the electric current is turned on in the double wire fences. In the mornings, when the garrison of the little chain of posts goes off duty, the towers of the big chain of posts are manned by guards. It is nearly impossible to get through both chains of posts. The guards in the big chain of posts are relieved only after the number of prisoners in the little chain of posts is confirmed. When an escape is made, sirens are blown, and with the help of 30 men and bloodhounds the fugitive is hunted for three days. After three days the search is given up, if the fugitive is caught alive, he is hanged in the presence of the whole camp. But if only his corpse is found, it is brought back to the entrance of the camp and a tablet is put in its hand with the inscription: 'here I am'."

"When we got to Birkenau, there were furnished a kitchen set up for 15,000 people, two completed houses, and one under construction. Each building is about 300 square meters big, and 400 to 500 persons are crowded together in them.

"Three days after my arrival I was sent with 200 Slovakian Jews to work in the labor of Auschwitz. Our living quarters were still in Birkenau. Twice a day we got something to eat. Sometimes a liter of turnip soup, and in the evenings 300 grams of bad bread. Working conditions were the worst and hardest imaginable, so that most..."
of us, weakened by hunger and unnuishihg food, could not stand up under it. Out of our working group, 30 to 50 people died daily. Many were simply struck down while working by the 'Capos' (overseers). The deficiency resulting from this was daily made up from those left in Birkenau. Then the second transport arrived, after 14 days, out of our transport of 600 persons only 150 people were left in the so-called 'sick house'. To it were brought the unemployable prisoners. We counted about 150 dead daily. The corpses were delivered to the Auschwitz crematorium.

"At the same time began the so-called 'Selection'. Every week, Sundays and Thursdays, the standortserzt determined the number of prisoners who were to be gassed and their bodies burned. Those selected were loaded on a truck, which brought them to the neighboring Birkenau. Whoever arrived there alive was gassed and burned in a pit. In the sick house, the notorious 'Block No. 7', about 2000 people died weekly, of whom about 1,000 died a 'natural' death, and about 600 through 'selection'."

(in the original protocol there follows here very exact information on the origin, number, and identifying numbers of the deportees.)
In Bunkaas we were brought in terrible circumstances together with other Jews from the vicinity, to a brickyard outside the city. There were a few thousand of us, who had mostly to live in the open. At first we received absolutely nothing to eat, and had to make out with the stocks we brought with us, and packets sent by friends living in Bunkaas. Later they opened a kitchen, from which we got just enough to keep us from starving. The men were taken out to work, they had to do quite pointless and worthless labor. They were severely beaten and exercised for hours. Among others, a Hungarian officer behaved himself very brutally.

Wednesday, the 17th of May this year, 3,300 of us were passed into 46 freight-cars, 75 in a car. We were told in behalf of Dr. Spiegel, who ran the canteen, that the curtingo Brodaja had set aside a million pengo to enable us to be taken inland to a labor camp. Consequently, we left Bunkaas in the belief that we were going to a labor camp to work. As we passed naturalistically, some in our car expressed a certain doubt, because they maintained that we were going in the direction of Assas, not a labor camp. And sure enough, we came to Assas. There the cars were opened and Jewish members of labor battalions gave us water. They told us that we should take as much water as we could stock up, because we would get no more until reaching our destination. This proved to be true. We traveled for three days without the car doors being opened. I do not know the direction of the journey. As I stood by the window, said that we passed Assas. On Saturday, May 20th, we arrived, after a fearful trip. There was no station to be seen, but there must have been one fairly near, since there were many railroad tracks there. Outside our transport there were three other transports standing on the tracks, two from Subcarpathia, one from Assas. We had to get out. The baggage had to be left in the cars. This was taken out by young people with striped clothes, smeared with red color. We were separated into three groups: 1) men, 2) childless women and girls, 3) women with children. The two first groups were led off in a direction where a few houses were
evening. I asked a railroad man, how I could get to Hungary, he asked me, whether I had papers. I answered, of course. I asked for a ticket for Szlouva, because I saw exactly the same mountains as we have at home, and I assumed from that that I was near home. They answered me that they did not know the city. I was taken to an old gentleman, who also didn't want to know anything about this city. I was asked, where the station was; I naturally answered, in Hungary. They asked me again, if I had papers, I said I did. Since it was evening, I said that I would look them up and show them next morning. They were satisfied with this. Since I naturally wasn't going to wait until morning to show the papers, I went away from the station in the direction of the mountains on foot. I spent the night in the woods, in the morning I came to a hunter's house and asked, how I could get to Slovakia. I had been told, in the meantime, that Slovakia was over there. I was received in an unfriendly way and went on. Later I asked people, how to get to Slovakia, the direction was pointed out to me, but I was told that in this direction there was a border guard, and one could only pass there with papers. I naturally asserted that I had these, but went in another direction. I came back to Polish territory. A day and a night I wandered around, until I saw farmers working in a valley, who told me, that I was on Slovakian ground.
Budapest, July 18, 1944

The present state of measures taken by the Hungarian Government with regard to Jews is as follows:

1. The dispatch of Jews for work abroad is temporarily suspended.

2. In view of proposals submitted by the Swedish Red Cross, the Immigration Commission of Palestine, transmitted by the Swiss Legation, as well as by the UNRRA and the Hungarian Government has authorized the emigration of Jews to Sweden, Switzerland, Palestine and other countries.

a.) To Sweden, within the aforementioned scope of action of the Swedish Red Cross, Jews who will obtain from the Swedish Government Swedish nationality may emigrate. Jews who have relatives in Sweden, or have had commercial connections for some time with that country may emigrate to Sweden or Palestine.

This category includes between 400 and 500 persons.

b.) Emigration to Palestine, with the assistance of the Immigration Commission of Palestine and with the intervention of the Swiss Legation at Budapest, has been authorized to several thousands of Jews.

The above-mentioned persons may emigrate to Palestine if they are in possession of an "Immigration Certificate" delivered by British authorities.

c.) On the basis of the above-mentioned proposals of the
the War Refugee Board, the Hungarian Government has authorized the International Red Cross to send Jewish children under 10 years of age to Palestine. The same Committee (Board) will be authorized to materially aid Jews interned in Hungary.

Aside from the above-mentioned concessions the following alleviations have been accorded with regard to the treatment of Jews:

1. The sending of baptized Jews for work abroad has ceased for the future.

2. a.) The special administration of baptized Jews has been entrusted to the "Council of Baptized Jews" organized on July 8, 1944.

   b.) Jews who have been baptized before August 1, 1941, may remain in the country but their segregation from non-Jewish persons will be ordered.

   c.) They are entitled to all the advantages of practising their religion.

3. a.) Facilities provided for with regard to Jews domiciled at Budapest will be applicable to baptized Jews outside the capital.

   b.) A revision on the subject of baptized Jews sent to work in Germany is envisaged.

4. It will be established, as soon as possible, who is to be considered as a converted Jew and that will be done not only for Jews between 16 and 60 years but for all Jews of all ages.

5. Non-converted Jews serving in labor groups in Hungary will
will be replaced by baptized Jews.

6. Converted Jews will be authorized to leave their home on Sundays and religious holidays at a time which will permit them to satisfy the obligations of their religion.

7. The following are exempt from wearing a Jewish star:
   
a.) Members of the family of ministers of a Christian faith (relatives, brothers and sisters, wives and children of Protestant pastors.)
   
b.) Bearers of ecclesiastical decorations (Papal)
   
c.) Members of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

II.

1. a.) Discretionary right is reserved by H.S.H. the Regent to exempt a certain number of Jews.
   
b.) Jews married to a person of Christian faith will be exempt.
   
c.) Jews who wear certain war decorations (Gold Medal of Military Merit, etc.)
   
d.) Jews who have certain special merits.
   
e.) Priests of Christian cults.

2. The departure of Jews for work abroad will be done within conditions respecting the laws of humanity and the Hungarian Red Cross will have the possibility of supervision.
3. The dispatch of parcels of foodstuffs will be authorized for persons interned in concentration camps through the channel of the Red Cross.

Budapest, July 16, 1944
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTE

Mr. Katzki is communicating with Mr. Maxson, in the Military Attache's office in Istanbul, in order to attempt to have these questions answered by courier from Bucharest.

Mr. Wisner has been supplying information to the OWI.
Istanbul, September 9, 1944

Mr. Headman:

Mr. Charles Bissman, whom you probably know, in our representing the Joint Distribution Committee in Istanbul in place of Mr. Moon, has been consulting with us following the receipt of your letter and is scheduled to travel via the Aden route through the Indies to Mr. Bissman.

The United States Near East Refugee Board is actively and directly interested in assisting refugees and oppressed peoples in enemy-occupied or satellite countries, and we were very much interested to learn of the things that Mr. Bissman has to say. The requests regarding relief contained in your letter were kindly considered by Mr. Bissman, and you will hear from him more directly about this. In the meantime, in relation to rescue work, we feel that we are lacking considerable information which, if in our possession, would assist us greatly in gauging the refugee situation in Istanbul with reference to the programs which we are trying to develop. It would be of tremendous aid to us if you could advise us in a number of matters which are of real interest, and in which we would like to have your judgment.

1. Do you have any information as to the number of Armenian nationals, such as roiefs, dervishes, etc., who are now in Istanbul? Are they refugees concentrated in one place, and are they being cared for? What is the status of these people in Istanbul, in view of present circumstances? Is their evacuation to other countries urgent? If so, for what reasons?

2. Is there any chance, as you see it, for any such to leave Istanbul in the near future? I refer especially to the dervishes and the cadi. Under what circumstances would these be able to leave?

3. Is there a move on the part of Armenian nationals to desert for Palestine or elsewhere? I refer to
I would suggest that, for the sake of quick and accurate information, you telegraph to me such information which, in your opinion, should be imparted to us urgently, and which is of such a nature that it can be telegraphed through open wires. By address I mean that of the American Consulate-General in Istanbul.

I. A. H.
Dear Mr. Pehle:

For your information, and in the event that you have not already received it from other sources, we are enclosing herein a translation of the Amnesty Decree issued by the new Rumanian Government, which relates in part to persons in Rumania who have been interned or imprisoned on political grounds.

We call your attention particularly to the special section decreeing the abolition of concentration camps in Rumania.

We have no further information, up to this moment, as to the manner in which the provisions of the Amnesty Decree are being executed, but we are pursuing the matter because of their connection with the efforts of the War Refugee Board in behalf of oppressed peoples in Rumania.

Cordially yours,

/s/ I. A. Hirschmann

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attache

Mr. J. W. Pehle, Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Enclosure

CC - Messrs. Pehle, D'Hois, Abrahamson, Friedman, Lesser

Miss Hodel
Regarding Decree No. 3072 of September 7, 1940, we decree:

Article 1. Amnesty is granted on all violations of law provided for by penal codes, military justice codes and special laws, brought to action (charged) or committed after January 1st, 1918, not out on political charges, whether they have not been proved, are about to be investigated, or have been definitely tried, without regard as to whether they come under civil or military codes.

Article 2. Those persons do not benefit under the amnesty who, after January 1st, 1914, have been guilty of intention or execution of political infractions, either as moral or material authors or accomplices of political murders, thefts, perpetrators or instigators of arson, or those who under the pretext of political activity have pursued such aims.

Article 3. Amnesty is granted for infractions committed by civilians or army men after January 1st, 1918, which are provided for by military justice codes, whether they have not as yet been discovered, are being investigated, or are now at the examining magistrate's, or have been definitely tried. These are:

Desertions, Article 543, 557 of the Code of Military Justice.
Non-submission to enlistment, Article 542, 544.
Destruction of military objects, Article 555, 568 of the Military Code, as well as infractions provided for and punished under Articles 569, 570, 599, 611, 612, 613, 617, 618, and 503 of the Military Justice Code.
Also, infractions intended or committed after January 1st, 1930, and provided for by special decrees:
Decree dated February 26th, 1940, and its amendments on requisitions; the decree for espionage of June 26th, 1930; the decrees on Air-Defence; the decrees which deal directly with mobilization of the war, 1943-1944, as well as those provided for by military orders, regardless as to whether they are applied (meted out) to military men or civilians.

Article 4. Amnesty is granted for infractions committed after January 1st, 1918, whether they have been discovered or are by way of being investigated, or are now being tried, or even if they have been definitely judged:

a) for the peasants within the application of prestation tax, agricultural mobilization, the practical application of agricultural plans in war-time, as well as for infractions of public laws.
b) for workers in industries and employees of all categories for having supported their claims, on professional questions, or for infractions of the application of the decree regarding regulation in time of war.

c) all infractions provided for by the law on religion, in relation to the persecutions of religious sects, and the decrees having a racial character.

Article 5. This decree applies to the perpetrators, their accomplices, and all those who have favored any infractions, as well as to any additional accomplices. Those definitely condemned will be restored to their political and civil rights. The Minister of Justice will see to the application of the present decree.

Bucharest, August 23, 1944. The President of the Council of Ministers, C. Sandescu. The Minister of Justice, Lucetiu Patascanu.
Translation August 23, 1944

DECREES REGARDING THE ABOLITION OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS

On the basis of Decree No. 3072, September 7, 1940, in conformity with a report issued by the Minister of Justice, we decree:

As from the publication of the present decree, all internment camps created by any administrative order are abolished on Romanian territory. All those interned will be set free immediately without further formality. At the same time, from the publication of the present decree all administrative orders relating to forced domicile are abolished.

Article 26 of Decree 236, dated February 5th, 1941; Decree 552 of March 2, 1943, as well as all other decrees contrary to the present decree are abrogated.

Signed: The President of the Council of Ministers, Constantin Sandescu.
Dear Mr. Abrahamson:

In connection with the fresh possibilities which now seem to exist for the emigration of Jewish people in Hungary to Palestine, Mr. Katzki has submitted to the Jewish Agency representatives in Istanbul the list of Jewish people in Hungary which you gave him prior to his departure. The Jewish Agency representatives in Istanbul have advised us as follows:

"The list is being checked by our office and unless the persons mentioned therein have already been approved, they will be now granted immigration certificates to Palestine."

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attaché

Mr. Albert Abrahamson
Assistant Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Department
Washington 25, D. C.
AMERICAN EMBASSY
Istanbul, August 2, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I am enclosing herein a copy of an interesting report which I just received from the Jewish Agency representative in Istanbul.

1) Report dated July 7, 1944, including statistics on the situation of the Jews from Holland, etc. These figures were based upon information received by Mrs. Gertrude Van Tijn, who was a leader of the Jewish Refugees Committee in Amsterdam; Dr. Täube, a veteran Zionista; and others. These people passed through Istanbul among the group exchanged for German nationals, as reported to you in a special cable on the subject.

2) A digest of reports regarding the situation of the Jews in Belgium.

3) On pages 3 and 4 of the report are some notes on the concentration camps in Holland. Page 5 contains some information about the camps in Poland.

I trust you will find these reports of interest.

Yours truly,

( scalability)
I. A. Hirschmann

Special Attache

Mr. John W. Pehle, Executive Director

War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.
Situation of Jews from Holland etc.
(information received by
Mrs. Van-Tijm, Dr. Tanen, etc.)

1) HOLLAND

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Departed to Poland</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interned in conc. o. Vesterbok</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; Bergen-Belsen</td>
<td>4,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1,800</td>
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2) BERGEN-BELTIEN

Interned according to nationality

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<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>1,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without nationality</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double nationality</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engl.-Roh.</td>
<td>180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>270</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
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<td>Equador</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti, Peru and San Salvador</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3) VIENNA

Jews remaining in Vienna

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Mischlinge</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deported to Theresienstadt</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(only 3,500 remained)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deported to Poland</td>
<td>48,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Digest of Reports
regarding the situation of Jews in
Belgium.

Before the war there were about 100,000 Jews in Belgium. The majority of them emigrated (sic) to France after the occupation of Belgium but 50,000 came back after the armistice.

In 1941 the Jews must present themselves to the police and wear the David star. 45,000 Jews, only 5000 of which are Belgian, declare themselves.

The Germans appoint the "Association of the Jews of Belgium" to defend the Jewish interest. This association helped the German authorities by encouraging and even calling the Jews to present themselves to the police, or as workers for obligatory work. They were all interned in the camp of Malines, deported about 1,000 at a time. The Germans also hunted the Jews everywhere and in every way. Thus the number of Jews deported so far is no less than 27,000.

Clandestine Jewish Relief Organsations.

The Central Committee of Defense is responsible (sic) for everything concerning Jews. It works and collaborates with the Belgian National Movement of Resistance. It has two sub-committees.

1. Children's Committee.
2. Social Relief Committee.

In the central committee of Defense and in the children's committee the majority are communists.

The Belgian authorities as well as the national institutions (Red-Cross, National Relief, etc.) have been most helpful in the renewal of identity cards for example and in many other ways.

Deportations.

First the Jews are concentrated in the Malines camp where they are allowed to get parcels. Since a certain time children and people above 60 years of age are not deported but are placed under the care of the "association of the Jews of Belgium". In July 1941 and October 1943 the number of deportees per month was 1,500. Today about 800 every two months. At first about 200 Jews could escape from the trains every month, but now this has become impossible.

No news from those who were sent to Poland except an occasional letter telling of massacres. Numerous letters...
from Upper-Silesia where Jews work in mines, underfed, with no medical care. They are sent to Poland when they are too weak to work.

About 15-18,000 Jews are left in Belgium.

I. Jews with a legal status. (about 5000)

a) 3000 personal of the A.J.B.
b) 600-800 people above 60 years of age, taken care of by the A.J.B.,
c) 400 children
d) 200 sick people living in two Jewish hospitals.
e) 600 Jews in concentration camp of Malines.

II. Jews in illegal position.

12,000 Jews are hiding. 1800 children were hidden in convents or in Christian families by the children's committee, who lacks after them and has a monthly budget of 1,000,000 Belgian Francs that comes from the Joint through certain Belgian banks, from a monthly collection of money raised by the members of the committee, from contributions from national Belgian institutions and from certain private donors.

1,000 children placed in families by their parents,
1,000 children hiding with their parents
8,000 adults hiding. (3,600 in Brussels, 600 in Antwerp 800 in the country)

The minimum sum needed to survive is 1000 francs per month per person, but the central committee can give only 300 to a person plus a parcel, or 400 francs to a couple plus two parcels. The number of those who need help and cannot get it is augmenting every day. The Red-Cres and the Belgian national Relief gives 3000 food parcels a month to the central committee, who has a monthly budget of 1,200,000 francs (200,000 being the normal monthly budget of the A.J.B. and 1,000,000 from the Joint).
Barneveld

At Beetschouwen 6 Jews, former members of the S.S.B., live freely but cannot leave the city.

At Barneveld in two castles, Jews who had rendered service to Holland in different fields were interned under the supervision of a director and 6 assistants who are angierman. They are not obliged to work, but must cook and keep the place clean.

Chalutzim at Westerbork

The first big group which stayed in W. came from a kibbutz the 1.10.42. Most of the Chalutzim were saved from deportation due to their productive work and to their connections. They lived in barracks (also), worked out of the camp, in a broom factory in winter, and with peasants in the sugawr. They continued their work of education. In September 40 they had to leave for Poland, about ten were sent in a camp in Southern Germany with all those who had certificates for Palestine.

By Aspasia ad astra.

Westerbork

Former camp for emigrants, who had illegally arrived from Germany. After German occupation only for Jews. At the beginning of 1942 all Jews of German origin and all others from 18 to 65 years of age were concentrated there. A German commander (Deppner) was appointed besides the Dutch one. The camp was enlarged and used as a transit camp. In July 750 young Jews ordered to go to work in Germany came to Westerbork with no luggage except a rucksack. They had to get inscribed at the Judenrat and declare their wealth. In August 600 Jews who had tried to escape from going to Germany were caught and came to W. in terrible condition. Thereafter deportees were allowed to take only 10 K.M. From a concentration camp at Amersfort came 250 Jews most of whom were converted and 50 of which were priests etc. Every week 2 convoys left for Auschwitz.

Life and Conditions at Westerbork

The Jews themselves were in charge of the canteen and of the service in the camp, as well as of the office of "complaints" were one could write a petition to be fed if one were a foreigner, a half-Jew, or a diamond worker. The German commander had a Jew as an assistant. The camp had a special body of men acting as police (Ordnungsdienst) who were in charge of keeping order, transporting the luggage and keeping watch over the camp prison (Strafbaracks).
Fund very poor. In two dormitories containing 150 places, 1000 Jews were packed with one washstand and one cot in every dormitory. They were not given any blankets. They had to work twelve hours a day plus hours of exercise, even on Sundays. For any small reason people were sent to the camp prison or barracks. Even here one could bribe the Germans with money and diamonds. Sometimes the Dutch policemen would help a Jew to escape. The 54 Dutchman who watched the camp were thieves or murderers freed from prison to become SS. Every two months the Dutch police would be changed. The Chalcolith filled the camp watched by the police. In June 1943 a "recreation" group formed by 80 artists under the direction of Max Abrich gave concerts or shows.

On the 1st of October all the Jews working in camps came to Westerbork followed by their families. Thus 12,000 Jews came and there was food for 2200 only. Many died of hunger.

In a camp for training SS, experiments were made on Jews, they were buried alive up to the neck or were fed on half a liter of soup a day. They were all carried to the hospital of Westerbork. All those whom I saw had their flesh decomposed and their bones showing and many had to be amputated (sic) of a leg or arm.

Every Tuesday or Friday a train left with 1000 Jews for Auschwitz to Poland. Old people of 80 years of age, the sick as well as the orphans were packed in wagons and sent to v. In May 1945 no Jews were left in Amsterdam except those working for the Judenrat. The Jewish quarter was surrounded by the German police and the Jews were sent directly to Poland.

3000 sick children were sent to the camp at Vught; 80% of them died there, but three days later they were again packed in merchandise wagons, the living and the dead together.

The last action took place on September 23, 1943. All the Jews were arrested and sent to Westerbork including the Judenrat. Only the Jews married to Christians were left. In Holland, officially, no Jew is left.

Vught

At first 600 Jews (300 men and 300 women) arrived at the former concentration camp of Vught as specialists to prepare barracks for different industries such as textile, diamond, leather and electraceutical (Philips). Mr. Bluth of the Judenrat went to Vught to talk over certain questions with the camp authorities. He is responsible for having propagated the news that the conditions at Vught were satisfactory. In reality 8,000 Jews were terribly until they are sent further on. There is no medical care and the men see their wives and
children only once every fifteen days.

**Letter and Information about the camps**

**In Poland**

About 1,200 letters received from Poland through the Judenrat, from Nonevitz, Lesnovitz. Men and women are separated, food is meager, work hard and treatment bad. In many cases we found out that the letters were dictated to the expeditors. *Illegal letters* coming with the Waterbork-Poland train informed us that the deportees passed through Bremma, Breslau, Berlin or Auschnitz. The trip lasted three days. Sometimes the German Red-Cross would give bread and coffee or soup or nothing. Near Breslau there was a camp for the Jews of Rotterdam and a big camp with stone houses near Auschnitz.

The night before the departure of the convoy it was forbidden to leave the barrack to prevent running away or hiding in the camp. At 4 o'clock in the morning the ones who were leaving were notified. Luggage was carried to the train by porters of the "Voluntary Column". At first the trains were normal with seats for everyone, and beds for the sick and for people above 75 years of age. After May 80 people were packed in wagons of merchandise trains. The sick 25 in a wagon got a bit of straw to sleep on.
THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN EMBASSY
Istanbul, August 8, 1944

Dear Mr. FBI:

The enclosed reports were made available to us by a representative of one of theouflaging groups engaged in relief and rescue work in Istanbul.

1) A report regarding the destruction of one of the factories for the production of Jewish foodstuffs. I have sent the report exactly as it was received in Istanbul, through underground channels.

2) A report on the disappearance of Jewish workers from the town of Ayas, which was one of the larger Jewish communities in Turkey.

I enclose that both the foregoing reports are forgeries in nature, and if we will be that additional evidence will be necessary in the coming trial, we are prepared to obtain such evidence.

In another forger's message, which arrived from Turkish underground channels on a date of June 1, we learned that on May 31, 33 motor cars accompanied by armored cars carrying Jews of the town between the towns of Bursa and Samsun and from the 13th to the 27th of May, 110,000 Jews of this group were sent through the city of Istanbul, coming from Syria.

The above may also be conveyed to you of the conditions which exist in Central Europe. It may be well as a commentary upon that moving one to think that the German authorities had no part or responsibility in the extermination of Jews to Poland.

Yours truly,

J. S. Steinmann
Special Attaché

Dr. John W. Fohls, Executive Director
Embassy of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Enclosures
32,000 - 35,000 600 naturalized French Jews. These Jews arrived with their relatives (altogether about 1600 persons). Therefrom came about 400 men and 200 women, wearing the numbers, to the usual manner, in the camp whereas the other 1000 French Jews: women, old men, children, were simply sent on a nearby rail in the Birkenwald, and were put to death by gas and burned.

From then on each Jewish transport was handled in the same way. About 1/3 of the deported men and 1/5 of the deported women were sent to the camp, the others immediately put to death by gas and burnt.

The putting to death by gas and the burning was executed by the so-called "special detachment" which worked in two layers, day and night. During this time the Jews were put to death by gas and burned at a number of 100,000. The persons of the "special detachment" lived separately. Because of the corpse-scent, which they spread, we were not left in contact with them. They were always dirty (sic), completely unpruned and brutal.

In February 1943 the newly constructed crematory and the gas-room were opened. For the moment there are 4 crematories in Birkenau: The crematories consists of three parts:

a) burning-stoves
b) "bathing-hall"
c) gas room.

From the middle of the stoves a high chimney stands out, around which nine stoves with each 4 openings are constructed. Each opening can contain three normal corpses. The capacity of the stoves is of 2000 corpses daily. Nearby is a big preparation hall which is constructed to give the impression of a bathing establishment. The hall can contain 2000 persons and as it is pretented (sic), there are beneath big sitting rooms too. From here a door and some stairs lead to the gas-room, which is below, very long and narrow. On the wall of the gas-room are applied imitations of shower-arrangement, so that the rooms awakes the impression of a giant bathing-room. On the flat roof of the room is a window, which is closed hermetically by three valves. From the gas-room, rails are leading through the hall to the stoves. The victims are lead (sic) into the hall, where they are told to get a bath. There they undress themselves and in order (sic) to strengthen their belief, they get a towel and soap. Then they are driven into the gasroom. After closing the doors, the SS-men spread through the valves into the room, a powderlike preparation out of tins. On the tins is the inscription "Cyclone for combating the nuisance" and they wear the mark of a Hamburg factory. Probably it is a cyan-preparation which, at a certain temperature, gets sort of gas. After three minutes everyone is dead.
April 28. 11 squares were assigned to the Jews as a ghetto. These were reduced to three, on the 30th of April. At least the greatest part of Jews of Kassa were nevertheless sheltered in the brick-yard.

May 2nd. The fate of the 12,000 Jews sheltered in the brick-yard is catastrophic. Women, children and old persons are sheltered under a roof in a drying-room of the brick-yard, but the poor persons deprived of all their goods, cannot be protected there, as the drying-rooms have no side-walls. As the evacuated had to leave at once their lodgings - which afterwards were completely robbed - they arrived at the brick-yard without the slightest equipment and without food. Only 50% of the evacuated got food. Drinkwater is brought there once a day by the watering-cars of the town.

May 8th. From a true old friend, a high personality, we got the following letter: "For some hours I am out of the horrors. The community kitchen needed me for a certain work, and I came out for a short time. I fear, I can't stand it for long, for we are suffering beyond description. We lay in the dust (have neither straw-mattress nor cover) and will freeze to death. The lodging is sealed, I do not see any way out. So not send me anything, we don't get it anyway. For some days we have still something to eat, but it will be furtheron, only God knows. Here are about 15,000 persons. The community-kitchen gives already yet, after long waiting in a line, a sort of soup-liquid. But who will continue to support this institution, the community won't be able to do so. I don't eat for days and hope so to shorten my way. We are so neglected, that we do not look humanlike anymore. No possibility for cleaning. Since we are here, we did not take off the clothes. Best greetings to you all, pray for us, we should die soon.

May 15th. The first 8 barracks of the camp were emptied, with that began the last steps of the suffering of the Jews from Kassa. First 4800 persons were put into waggons. The men and youngsters were completely undressed under the open sky, in front of the waggons, so that they may hide nothing. The women and girls were examined in the same way by the constables in the barracks. The four weeks of concentration, have so completely ruined our brothers, that 8 of them died when put into the waggons. In a waggon were put, under terrifying brutalities - 70 to 80 persons.

May 18th. The evacuation is going on. The concentration camp was completely cut off from the outer world by the constables and policemen. Even the members of the Jewish council were not allowed to approach the camp.

May 20th. In the evening at 6 o'clock, the members of the Jewish council are arrested. Those christians who helped the Jews in some manner, were also put in waggons and taken away together with the Jews.

June 7th. No Jew is anymore left in Kassa.
Istanbul, July 22, 1944

Dear Mr. Fehlin:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from T. C. at Hamburg, dated July 10, 1944, and written by one of the members of the Jewish Council Committee. It contains a list of the names of about 80,000 Jewish refugees, who have been executed, missing, or in a state of great suffering. The list was compiled by the authorities of the Joint Distribution Committee in their office in Hamburg.

The letter is being forwarded to you at this time in the hope that the full information contained therein has not yet been made available to you through other channels.

Also included is a report from Wroclaw, dealing with the condition of the concentration camps in Hungary which is of interest.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

I. M. Eichmann

Dr. John Fehlin, Executive Director
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
Washington, D.C.
Budapest, Feb. 14, 1915

I have just been informed that in a camp of the organization the first 20,000 dollars to be spent will be for clothing, so it is a question of getting ready to look (this) month, next, and all the months to come until they are finished. (In this preliminary estimate, the cost of clothing is fixed that per person and for one month will amount to 500 francs. Therefore, that monthly expenditure of 50,000 francs must be expected.)

We have been placed under the impression that in the camps of the (organization members), those who have to leave behind all their personal belongings and clothes, and are merely waiting for the time of the little things ... clothing, tools, clothing, shoes, etc., will have to be prepared. Here too, and will have to be transferred to the bigger offices and headquarters at 25,000 francs. The local committee, therefore, in 50,000 francs, medicines and other hygienic elements, including clothing in quantities. Those could have been prepared in the

It is proposed, therefore, in order to unify all these actions, an amount of 500,000 dollars shall be available in Budapest, which amount shall be disposed of by a local action committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Christ, von Pavilari. To this action ought to belong: Szepesi, Dr. Oscar Perini, Julius Rabin, and Dr. von Ros.

It is important that this amount of money is available at any time and in any emergency. Therefore, this amount is to be placed in the bank of the organization. Here are the amounts:

1. Therefore, recapitulation: (1) For general expenses in an amount of 500,000 dollars is to be kept in reserve.

2. For clothing 50,000 francs per month.

3. For medicines and hygienic supplies per month.

4. For unforeseen expenses in connection with the camps.

25,000 

500,000 dollars
vitality of Israel begins, about 700,000 people are at risk. However, the results of the State of the Nation are, unfortunately, not favorable.

From Hungary, Morocco, Tunisia, and South Turkey are about 10,000. The Hungarian minority fromroland, there are about 20,000 of whom, the majority sheltered in a local, so-called "refrigerator." We still work in detail on this point and whether there is an attack that will be planned, and the Hungarian council. Among them, 20,000 Hungarian, close to 30,000 Arabic refugees, 20,000 Albanian, and 20,000 Serbian.

The plan which is discussed, born in Middle interest cannot be described. Usually, the council, the Hungarian authorities have already been agreed upon. The Hungarian council, which represents a minority, of the Ministry of the Hungarian council, is not quite fit for the task. The plan, which was put forward last week, is the reason for the Hungarian chief publicist's complaint, and to his efforts it still be to the analysis of 20,000 refugees. However, if the plan is decided not thereby a few thousand persons will save themselves.

You have probably been most accurately informed on the negotiations carried on during the last weeks by Loyal Friend. I can assure you that the JLC is also concerned. It is, therefore, a question of saving persons in the manner of a deportee. The problem, naturally, refers to us, you know, the only way to Spain by adequate counter-measures. Would you not be informed in this section, which I do not know, I was unable to communicate immediately, with the people in Istanbul and get detailed information thereon. I accompany the only way to be immediately upon receipt of these lines you be yourself to Spain and immediately negotiate with the government there to take over the representatives. Since the cable authorities absolutely decline another solution, journey to Turkey does not come into question at all, there remains, therefore, only Spain. Therefore, every effort to be urgently taken thereof:

(a) get a first-class passage for five to six thousand a week be available.
(b) that this weekly quota per ship be further carried to

On point (a) is to be reported that the number 6,000 is not fixed, it may eventually amount to a thousand or fourfold figure. Therefore, care should be taken that it eventually under arrive the reception possibility be secured.
In order to... should I be able to receive us once

In point of view, that need always... ought to

He... ought to receive them... Hamilton, this part of the position to

I cannot be said... the people or better officer, the former will

Neither... proposal to advance the language of the American

He who are quietly... therefore, I be there.

In the first day the establishment of the Federal Church is expected.

Three where our person is estimated, at the same time thousands of

I know that you have received or hand-written letter. To this

I... every man to hold in excess of an amount of 250,000 gold

Our country has already been overtaxed by the executive action,

We... have been 250,000 dollars at July 1st at our disposal in

In order that... in what conditions here, which have
time, we shall believe to the best of our

The new one day prior to March 1st, when it MIGHT before

Close, you invested him property in exchanging loan for the

I hope you will not be in the state of the... center of the

I believe the letter to remain over this amount as well as over

I think he will be in the situation to make no distinction for us

To think... must be maintained. Finally, I am and... responsible

I do you well. I am the intentions of the money

Finally, I want you to hope that I have moved about.

Perhaps you have the possibility to send no news, in the same manner

I... 1793, I shall... to be in a personal situation, especially since July

I hope you have the possibility to send no news, in the same manner in which I do and... about the condition of your child, since I beg you to do so. Particularly well, you let us know whether your efforts in our favor have been successful.

With many hearty greetings in the hope that I may be privileged in this life to see you, I sign.

Sincerely yours,
If you have the possibility to secure for us permission of any type or any other protection through F. B. R. please bring this, etc. Thankful.
The camp at Majdanek has been closed to foreign visits, and no Muscovite has been admitted to it since. In the camp of Majdanek, the situation is now better. Up to this day, 400,000 Jews have been deported, and it is believed that the regime has been quite efficient. In fact, the number of Jews has decreased to about 200,000. The situation is not promising, and it is feared that the regime will not change in the near future.

For instance, the fake documents that were issued by the regime have been discovered. A selection of the camp's records reveals that only 10% of the Jews were able to escape the German regime. The first two years, according to sources, were supplied by the camp authorities. From then on, the situation deteriorated rapidly.

We have received a letter from a trusted source (Torj), accompanied by our request that you provide us with the power of attorney. This is a first step towards the establishment of a film services company in the U.S. We have appeared on the list of the Jewish Agency, which have been approved by the Jewish Agency. With this power of attorney, we can start to work on the project. We shall continue our efforts to assist the Jewish Agency in its work.

In addition, the following plan is available:

- In addition to these plans, a new project has been created, aimed at 10,000 Jews of these categories unable to work, which, however, must be completed and presented exclusively by us or by the Jewish Agency.
In conclusion, this problem, as a first transport 1000 boys
will correct itself from hence, in which case to be included may  
the remainder of the boys, the soldiers, and so on. This transport  
could be stationed at Groes in the German provincial area and  
would be provided as soon as the transportation possibility into  
the Foreign Possessions agreed. If it is available for you, it  
could be, therefore, extremely  
important to inform the Allied Government of your wish in order  
that the transportation possibility be granted at least only, if not  
elsewhere, then take a pick-up area, and the American  
representative because the help of the Allied Government would  
only be given to the children and it might be pointed out that  
all those who still continue their journey to try as soon as possible, for the boys would have  
arrived too. If I could give you a negative decision in the  
transportation possibility, it would be difficult for the children  
in the above-mentioned area, and I would continue their journey,  
they could be filled again -- mentioning it is not too late. At any rate,  
however, it is shown by the American that the situation somewhat  
has to be filled, should there be a similar opinion and therefore  
the situation in the area will remain unchanged. Your  
information should be retransmitted to the office and in your view, as  
to the country of origin, the rest of America is almost nothing  
in comparison.

Based on the fundamental problem of a single solution, the  
rest of these resources will be delivered with high priority.  
Upon arrival, they will be delivered in a similar manner.  
These children will now be able to continue the camp.

Für jeden, der das Schicksal nicht kennt, haben meine Berichte die Wirklichkeit des Faktum, die ihnen nicht vertraut ist, auch in einem anderen Kontext, als ich es bisher getan habe, dargestellt. Es ist wichtig, dass wir uns daran erinnern, dass die Schicksale von Millionen von Menschen von unserer Verantwortung abhängen, und dass wir uns dafür verantwortlich fühlen müssen.


der Deportation im allgemeinen, kann mehr keine Rede sein.

Dagegen handelt es sich um die Besetzung eines kleinen Teiles der arbeitsunfähigen Menschen und Kinder und die aufgegebene Erwartung, dass in der Arbeit eingereihten Juden nichts zustöße und in allgemeinen die Verpflegung erhalten, wie die sonstigen Arbeitskategorien dort. Mit diesen kaufmännischen Erwartungen müssen wir uns leider zufrieden geben und alle verloren, um wenigstens auf dieser Linie das nackte Leben zu sichern, alles getan zu haben. In diesem Zusammenhange bestehen folgende Pläne:


Es ist daher Ihre allererste und wichtigste Aufgabe, sich durch Baly mit den Joint in Lissabon in dieser Richtung ins Unternehmungen zu setzen. An zuständiger Stelle um die notigen Einreisen und Weiterreisemöglichkeiten zu verhandeln, evtl. zu diesem Zwecke die Unterbringung in Interimslagern in Spanien, bis die Möglichkeit der Hinzuführung gegeben ist, die Versorgung der Frauen und Kinder mit allem Notigen, kurz es müssen alle mit solchen Transporten zusammenhängende Fragen gründlich bearbeitet und gewissenhaft organisiert werden.

Im Zusammenhang mit diesem Problem sollen als erster Transport 1000 Menschen evtl. direkt von hier abgeben, in welchem viele Prominente, Rabbonim, deren Familien usw. eingereiht werden sollen. Diesen Transport wuerden sie auch zuerst in den deutschen Interimslagern unterbringen und weiterexpedieren.
so bald die Einreisemöglichkeit nach der Iberischen Halbinsel genüht ist, wenn es in der Einreisemöglichkeit besteht, wäre es daher ausserst dringend bei diesen zwei Vorgängen oder Verwaltungsaufräumungen, dass die Einreisewilligung sofort erteilt werden, wenn nicht anders so in ein Auffanglager und konnte auch das K. K. eingeschaltet werden. Vielleicht musste die Hilfe der alliierten Vertretungen auch in Anspruch genommen werden und konnte darauf hingewiesen werden, dass all diese Menschen so bald als möglich nach dem weiterfahren, denn der größte Teil besitzt Zertifikate. Wenn teu-
sen die Einreise nach Iberien rasch erhalten, so musste das dazu beitragen, die übrigen in den oben erwähnten Lagern halten zu können und wenn diese weiter so koennten diese frisch aus-
gefüllt werden, vorausgesetzt, dass es nicht zu spät wird. Jedenfalls aber, wenn auch unséits gezeigt wird, dass die Sache ernst angepackt wird, besteht mehr Vorsicht und Sicher-


Sowohl die Aufgabe, als auch die Verantwortung ist sehr gross. Die Lage ist im allgemeinen bereits geschildert, sie hat sich nur verschlechtert und es wird Tag fauer Tag ärger und schlimmer.
Die Mittel die Sie uns zur Verfügung gestellt haben, sind relativ für die ungewöhnliche Aufgabe gering. Wir sprechen schon nicht von den Verpflichtungen, die die zur vor die skizzierten Absagen übernommen haben, wobei wir allein auf sich angewiesen sind. Wir rechnen, dass die primitivsten Auslagen pro Kanner bei Grunddauer 50/100 Kr. etwa monatlich eines ist. 500,000 erforderlich, das müssen von sich unter allen Verständen flott zur Verfügung stehen, außerdem die Mittel, die wir für andere Zwecke evtl. noch benötigen oder benötigen sollten. Sie zu beschaffen, muss und soll die erste Pflicht sein.

endepost den 13.6.44

nun erfahre ich, dass von einigen Jahren die
zu erwartenden 20.000 geschickt werden sollen, bekann![was ge[geben wurde], dass sich durchweg um
unbedeutende Personen (Kinder, Frauen, Arme, alte
sich handelt, wird die Verhütung der Läger bis zu ihrem
transport nach Frankreich gesorgt werden müssen. Nach vor-
handenen geschätzten Rechnungen ergaben sich zum Ergebnis,
Fälle von Personen und Häuser mit mindestens einem halben
Frank belastet worden sind. Daraus ergeben sich bedenken, dass
namentlich allein die Beschaffung von 30.000 Menschen mindest-
sämtliche 2 Milliarden schweizer Franken bereit stehen muss.

Dass ist aber die Sache von der Ä, wo es alle ihren, wie
die oben mitgebrachten, zwingend bestimmten und so mit
sich nur unsere 2 Milliarden gesorgt werden müssen. Dassen,
entsprechend, dass eine zusätzliche Baracke benützt werden,
will ich erstmal mit einer ganz niedrig kalkulierten minimalen Summe
von 25.000 Franken bezogen werden müssen. Die Gesamtkosten werden
nicht über 150.000 Franken betragen. Anzahlung und sonstige hyg:
mittel müssen ebenfalls bereitgehalten werden, die angesteckte
 Geld bereit.

Der Vorschlag war, dass zur Versicherung aller dieser
Situationen ein Betrag von monatlich 660.000 Dollar in der
Schweiz bereit stehen soll über welchen Betrag ein hiesiges
Komitee unter Vorsitz des Herrn Philip von Freytag,
espriezen soll. Diesem Komitee müssten weiter angehören:
r. k. F. Banker, Julius Link, Joel Brand und Josef Blum.

So kann nicht genug oft betont werden, von welcher
der Vorsicht die sofortige disponibilität von Geldern ist.
Die Dollar müssen zu jeder Zeit und in den entsprechenden
Zusammenzusammenhang stehen, denn nur auf diese Weise kann
gesichert werden, dass wenigstens ein Teil der noch hier vorhandenen
Juden zu leben bleiben wird.

Ich rekapituliere daher:
1) für allgemeine Auslagen ist ein Betrag von
600.000 Dollar bereit zu halten
1) Verordnung über Tragen des Sterns
2) Ablehnung erster Angestellter
3) Entzug der Telefon- und Elektrokoncessionen
4) Wahrung aller Geschäfte
5) Konstruktion jüdis. Vermögen und Sparen desselben.
6) Tretbinden aller Arbeiten


7) Kürzung der Rationen für Juden, nur Brot wird in gleichen Quantum belassen. Das schwerlichste aller Verordnungen war die Ghettoverordnung. Schon anfangs Mai wurde mit der Errichtung
von Schlachtkommandos, die selbst in Konzentrationslagern vor dem Tod aus hingerichtet zu werden.


Das Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau war eines der größten Konzentrationslager, in dem mehr als 1,5 Millionen Menschen, überwiegend Juden, getötet wurden. Das Lager war von der SS-Mannschaft unter der Leitung des Häftlingsführers Oskar Schindler betrieben.

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den Aufgaben nicht ganz geraumt. Man kann auch unter dem
willkührlichen Einsatz des Schwiegersohnes des Oberbefehlshabers
von Jerusalem und seiner Beauftragten sowie den Beschlüssen noch
stilgere Aussagen vortragen zu vermuten sein, wenn der Plan zur
Erledigung gelangt, dass einige tausend Personen sich retten
würden.

Aussichtlich wurde eine unter die Verhandlungen, welche
in den letzten Tagen durch das Land geführt wurden, gesuert
informent. Ich hoffe an, dass auch der Jüd in diese Aktion
mitwachsen würde, die Bedeutung dieses Augenblicks liegt in der
einigen, eine Enttäuschung. Die Machlommen
müsten tatsächlich die Zeiten gegen außerordentliche Existenz-
ungen, heute noch Spanien bringen, allerdings, was ich nicht
nun mehr über die Aktion nicht-informiert sein, so bitte ich,
wie sich sofort mit den Leuten in Istanbul eine Verhandlung zu
halten und ihnen über Rsutters zu erfahren, seine Bitte an die
wäre, sofort nach Erhalt seiner Zellen, sich noch Spanien zu
geben und mit der dortigen Regierung wegen Übernahme der
Transporte dringend zu veranlassen. Die Deutschen sollten
anderen einer anderen Lösung entscheiden ab, dass seien nach der
Unität kommt unbedingt nicht in Frage es bleibt, aber mir
dieser ändern mag, unüberwacht Spanien offen, wo man andere dring-
nder vorgesehen werden, dass:
1) Aufnahmefähig für 8000 vorübergehend 5-6000 vorhanden sein sollen.
2) dass diese voraussichtlich durch Schiff nach Palästina weiter
befordert werden.

Zum Punkt 1) ist zu bemerken, dass die Zahl von 6000 eine
nicht fixe Ziffer ist, sie kann evtl. auch drei- oder vierfach
betragen, wovon wäre sicher zu sorgen, dass bei einem evtl.
entzogen dieser Zahl die Aufnahme-Sicherheit gesichert sei.

Zum Punkt 2) sollte Palästina nicht in der Lage sein, auf
einen dreissig-Tausend teuernd Personen aufzunehmen, so musste
evtl. Nordafrika oder ein anderer Staat bereit sein, vorüberge-
genden eine Enttäuschung, wenn Spanien mit ihrem vorüberge-
habenden Aufenthalt nicht dranverstanden wäre, wenn dann die

000294
...
...machte mich dann für einen Nachmittag, um Ihnen noch zu schreiben. Ich hoffe, Sie haben sich allmählich an die neue Umgebung gewöhnt. Ich hoffe, Sie befinden sich in einer Versammlung, in der es geschieht, seit Juli 48.

Trotzdem gibt es die Möglichkeit, dass es Ihnen vielleicht nicht gelingt, eine über die neuen Verhältnisse und über die neuen Ereignisse, so ermutigend, zu lesen, dass Ihnen das nicht gut tut. Daher möchten wir Ihnen sagen, dass wir Ihnen von der erfolgreichen Fortsetzung der Arbeit und von der weiteren Unterstützung und Unterstützung, die von Ihnen erwartet wird, Freude bereiten."

...teilen Ihnen durchaus die Hoffnung, dass es Ihnen noch in Ihrem Leben gezeigt wird, wie hoheitlich, sei es für uns alle...
Ankara, March 13, 1944

No. 996

Subject: Forwarding report from Mr. Ira A. Hirschmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Pehle, Acting Director of the War Refugee Board.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to forward herewith a report from Mr. Ira A. Hirschmann, Representative of the War Refugee Board, to Mr. John Pehle, Acting Director of the War Refugee Board, Washington, regarding efforts which are being made by Mr. Hirschmann and the Embassy to rescue oppressed minorities from Axis-occupied Europe.

Respectfully yours,

Lawrence A. Steinhardt

Enclosure:

Report as described.

Eldrops

To Department in original and hectograph.

c: Chauncey, Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pollak, Raine, Smith, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Pehle, Sargent, Maimon, Weinstein, Files
The relatively limited number of refugees who continued coming through Turkey by rail since late 1963, from the major Middle East countries virtually ceased on or about January 1, 1964. Prior to that time, during October, November, and December 1963, new arrivals came through Turkey from Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, and were not in Palestine. The Yugoslavs could not go through Greece or Italy, and the Romanians could not go through Bulgaria. For that reason the Bulgarians and any refugees they had found their way into Yugoslavia with Turkey as their intended destination leave Bulgaria. But for this reason the smaller number of refugees would have been more or less regular according to the schedule then existing.

This schedule of about eight weeks constituted nine families to enter Turkey on route to Palestine from each of the
The formal request is made by the government of the

*Foreign Countries* to the government of the

*Turkish Republic*. In accordance with the

*Foreign Affairs* of the Turkish authorities, special

*British Consul* is responsible for the issuance of

*Identity Card* to the British Consul in all mentioned

*Occupied Areas*. The British authorities authorized

*British Consul* to issue the *Identity Card* to the

*Occupied Areas*.

The British Consul only issues the *Identity Card* to the

*Occupied Areas*.

1. The British Consul prepares the list of names and

   addresses of all individuals who have been

   *Occupied Areas*.

   The list is then sent to the

   *Foreign Affairs*. The list is

   approved by the

   *Foreign Affairs*. The list is

   then sent to the

   *British Consul* in all *Occupied Areas*.

   The *British Consul* issues the *Identity Card* to the

   individuals listed.

2. The *British Consul* in all *Occupied Areas* issues the

   *Identity Card* to the individuals listed.

   The *Identity Card* is valid for

   *Occupied Areas*.

3. The *British Consul* in all *Occupied Areas* issues the

   *Identity Card* to the individuals listed.

   The *Identity Card* is valid for

   *Occupied Areas*.

4. The *British Consul* in all *Occupied Areas* issues the

   *Identity Card* to the individuals listed.

   The *Identity Card* is valid for

   *Occupied Areas*. The *Identity Card* is

   issued by the

   *British Consul* in all *Occupied Areas*.
While it is correct that the Turks had agreed prior to their arrival to permit more refugees to pass through Turkey than they had been able to leave the Balkan countries, it is also a fact that none of those who had been listed for departure had been delayed due to the above outlined red tape in
In order to facilitate the release of the ship with the passengers, we have proposed that it should go to Constantinople official. As stated previously, it must be understood that no such request can be entertained without a protest obtained through the International Red Cross or the fact that the ship, even as the Black Sea and Dardanelles, is entirely controlled by the Bolshevik and German Governments, and that such a condition would be subject to constant attack. Approval of the German, Russian, and British Governments is necessary. On the matter of the German approval, previous experience has indicated that such requests have been delayed for as long as six months. We have no way of knowing to what extent the Germans may delay approval in this instance. Meanwhile we have approached Mr. Shoul, the representative here of the International Red Cross, who is accordingly giving the case approval, and we have promised to expedite further action from the Germans with whom he has an active liaison.
Simultaneously with our efforts to secure the Swedish ship we determined to press for a Swedish boat. On January 31 a meeting was arranged for us by the Ambassador with Mr. Nyberg, the Swedish Minister in Athens, who asked to telegraph his government in Stockholm recommending the use of a Swedish ship for the above mentioned purpose. He asked on this day for permission to have the SS CARDINALIS, which was then on leave in Salonica, to carry the Swedish ship EMILIA damaged in accidents having occurred to it in the Mediterranean, for our purpose. Thus, this considerable number of Swedish ships flying from Greece to Syria, was recommended that this or another Swedish ship be diverted by permission of Stockholm for this purpose. In my telegram to you of February 1st (No. 303) I requested you to convey these efforts through the Swedish Minister in Washington. I should like also to record the co-operative attitude manifested by the Swedish Minister and his sterling efforts on behalf of our work.

Mr. Nyberg has today informed me of the telegram he received from Stockholm, about which I telegraphed you on March 7 (No. 354).

Meaningfully, an alternative proposal was made by the Jewish Agency to a shipper in Istanbul for the loan and eventual purchase of the SS NEPAL. In his telegram No. 369 of March 3, Ambassador Steinhardt informed you of the preliminary negotiations concerning the SS NEPAL. If the purchase of this ship can be arranged at a cost of approximately $200,000 it will be a signal innovation in the conduct of our work and the larger scope of the Jewish Agency's program, since it would not only transport the mass number of refugees by a vessel under charter, it will also open up possibilities of introducing the subject of larger quotas with the Turks by reason of the donation of the vessel by the Red Crescent. Ambassador Steinhardt informed me that, as a result of his discussions with the Turkish officials concerned with the people, he believes that may be capable of the proposal. I talked (today) with Mr. Abiel Razin Cohen, Director General of the Red Crescent, and as beneficiary of the proposed purchase of the NEPAL, is obviously eager to see the negotiations concluded on the organization of which he is head in in need of materials and funds, especially in view of recent earthquakes in Turkey, and would receive the proceeds of the sale of the vessel. We are planning to proceed with these negotiations with all possible speed, provided of course the War Refugee Board authorizes the $400,000 payment for the vessel.
By the time you receive this report we will either have concluded some arrangement for a ship or by telegraph inform the refusal of the Tunisian authorities to charter or to send any vessel, or of new obstacles beyond our control which may have intervened.

3. Inside the Balkans.

A. Bulgaria. For some time prior to my arrival here it was reported that the Bulgarian officials, controlled or supervised by Nazi officials, had substantially closed the door on refugee exits from Bulgaria. In my talks with the British authorities noted above, they insisted that the door out of Bulgaria was closed from the inside. On February 26th, at the suggestion of Ambassador Steinhardt, I made a trip to Istanbul, remaining five days, and among other things explored the situation presently existing in Bulgaria relating to the departure of Jewish refugees. I spoke with numbers of refugees who had just escaped from Bulgaria including several men who had previously held responsible positions in that country and whose information was checked as being truthful and reliable. It appears that at this date of writing, the Bulgarian authorities will permit a large number of refugees departures from Bulgaria.

Therefore, I reported to you in my cable of February 26th, 1944. It is not claimed that the Bulgarians will release their minority victims in large numbers, but they do seem willing to release two or three hundred a week if arrangements can be provided and administrative routine relaxed.

It was reported by the refugees who were interviewed by me and who had just arrived that the pressure of the Nazi military which was operating was much lessened prior to their departure. In this connection I append a memorandum from Mr. Albert Hone, Consul of the United States Consular post of Bulgaria, who has interviewed many refugees at one of the United States Consular posts in Bulgaria. This note is attached as a summary of a conversation with Mr. Hubert H. Hone, Assistant Foreign Service Officer, who dealt with Bulgarian questions in the American Consular Office at Istanbul, together with a copy of the Bulgarian anti-Jewish Law of August 29, 1942, which contains the regulation found in the Secretary of State by the then American Consul General, Mr. Samuel L. Rubin, on November 22, 1942. Included for your background information is a letter of March 15, 1943, from a Bulgarian woman describing vividly and at first hand the situation associated with the persecution program on a single day (Exhibit L). In addition, there is enclosed herewith a copy of a dispatch dated February 25th, 1944, from the American Consul General at Istanbul to the Secretary...
manian Government by the Department of State, as a consequence of
which the Rumanians are alleged to have repatriated the Jews de-
ported from Transnistria to Rumania. After 6,400 Jews had been
thus returned, the Germans intervened and the repatriation was
halted. Incidentally, I was told that a report was issued by
Mr. Long prior to my departure, that the United States Govern-
ment had allocated the sum of $300,000 to cover the expenses
of the transportation of 5,000 children from the Balkan countries
to Palestine. I do not know the authority for this statement
and refer to it only in the event that the War Refugee Board
may wish to check with the Department of State regarding its
veracity.

It is apparent that efforts to secure the release of the
thousands of Jewish refugees caught in the millstone in Trans-
nistria can only be achieved at the moment by the willingness
on the part of the present Rumanian Government to permit the
release of these people and for us then to find means of transpor-

tation, either direct or through Turkey to Palestine, which
for the moment is the only country where provision has been ar-
 ranged to accept any considerable number of refugees.

Special attention is again directed to the man who is gen-
erally held personally responsible for the policy leading to
these extremes. Marshal Antonescu enjoys a brilliant page in
the annals of infamy. I have been told that Mr. A. Cretzianu,
the newly appointed Rumanian Minister in Ankara, has the Marshal's
confidence and is ideologically and sentimentally opposed to the
Government's anti-semitic policy. At the proper moment, with
Ambassador Steinhardt's consent and employing the authority vest-
ed in me by the War Refugee Board to deal with the enemy, I ex-
pect to approach Mr. Cretzianu and possibly others who have con-
nections with the present Rumanian Government. Before these
talks you may be assured that I will first consult with Ambas-
dador Steinhardt and use every discretion not to make any state-
ments which could be interpreted as having a bearing on the pre-
sent political or diplomatic situation between Rumania and the
United States.

The Jewish population in Rumania, which was estimated at
the beginning of the war at about 900,000, is now considerably
reduced by: 1) mass massacres of the Jews in Bessarabia and
Bucovina; 2) the annexation of provinces of Transylvania to Hun-
gary; 3) the flight of Jews from Bucovina to Russia at the be-
ginning of the war with Russia. The greater part of the Jews
from Bessarabia and Bucovina (about 130,000) were expelled to
Transnistria (the area previously belonging to Russia). Of
no information available
A group of 350 Spanish refugees were permitted by the Hunga-
rian authorities to resettle in the Hungarian-occupied
region with a view to their immigration to Palestine.

In Hungary, I do not intend to give any pro-
posed solution to the situation in Hungary as it does not
render the present time suitable for such a solution.
On the contrary, as you are undoubtedly informed, the Hungarian
Government has recently been relatively lenient in the attitude
towards the Hungarians in affecting the movement of entry into Hun-
gary from the German-occupied countries and permitting the or-
ganization of expeditions for their safety and safe exit to other
countries. The suggestion has been made to the special publicities
of a compulsory nature to be employed to encourage the Hunga-
rians to proceed with and further their progress of enlightenment.

The delivery of the situation and the possibility of necessary
change are such that I should not recommend any such propaganda
at this moment—while the Hungarians have recently become "white"
propaganda with their neighboring satellites, even their own has
been of a limited nature and any statements which might encourage
them to feel that they had done a satisfactory job in this field
of clandestine movements since previously might lead them to ter-
minate their efforts and to decide that they had already won an
honorable place on the scene.

F. France. As stated in my telegram No. 995 of Febru-
ary 29th, Ambassador Steinhardt had, prior to my arrival here,
been exerting every effort to influence the Turkish Government
to repatriate 30,000 Jews in France who were allegedly distri-
buted in their Turkish nationality by operation of Turkish law. These
Jews of Turkish origin (many of whom admittedly must go back
many generations to establish Turkish origin) were reported to
be deported to Poland. On February 12th, Ambassador
Steinhardt spoke with the British Ambassador here who, at his
request, sent a note to the Foreign Office in support of a note
previously sent by our Ambassador concerning the plight of
these Jews in France of Turkish origin. In so doing, the British
Ambassador supported the position taken by Ambassador Steinhardt
to the Foreign Minister personally on the occasion to raise the
necessary representations to the Vichy Government that Jews of
Turkish origin should not be expelled from France. On March 3rd in
interview with the Chief Jewish refugee who had arrived
from France in the last week. They reported to me that the Jews
in France of Turkish origin numbered about 30,000 and of these
the Turkish Government had thus far authorized entrance visas to
Turkey for about 700. They stated with a degree of authority
that several thousand Jews of Turkish origin had been deported
to Poland, notwithstanding repeated protests by the Turkish