

Programs with Respect to Relief and
Rescue of Refugees; Other Evacuation
Projects

Evacuations from Greece

000599

A. GREECE (MATERIAL SENT FROM WRB OFFICE IN TURKEY)

B. GENERAL

000600

GREECE (Material sent from WRB Office in Turkey)



000601

IN REPLY REFER TO
FILE NO. 848 EAJ/sl



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

American Consulate,
Izmir, Turkey, February 20, 1945.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Herbert Katzki, Esquire,
War Refugee Board,
American Consulate General,
Istanbul, Turkey.

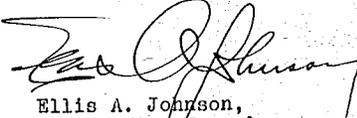
Dear Mr. Katzki:

Your letter of January 31, 1945, with further reference to the question of the Jews on the Island of Rhodes, was received in a recent pouch.

I regret that I have been unable to obtain any information regarding the six Jews you refer to as having escaped to Marmaris. I am, however, continuing my investigation, and in the event I learn anything of these people or obtain any other information regarding the Jews of the Island of Rhodes, I shall be glad to communicate such information to you immediately.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,


Ellis A. Johnson,
American Vice Consul.

000602

Translation

November 30, 1944

Broadcasts Received in Bulgarian

Sofia

Foreign news:

Athens - 29 - Reuter. The Rabbinate of Athens told the representatives of the press that of the 90,000 Jews who lived in Athens there only remain 8,000 - while the remainder were sent by the Germans to Poland, and that during this voyage, because of the suffering undergone by the Jews, many died en route. The Rabbinate added that on the islands of Crete and Rhodes not a single Jew remains, following German persecution and the actions on the part of the latter.

000603

11/29/44
Greece

file

November 29, 1944

Memorandum for Mr. Katzki:

In explaining the purpose of his visit to this office this morning, Mr. Ryan, who is secretary to the Papal Nuncio in Istanbul, said that the latter is also Vatican representative for Greece. Monsignor Roncalli recently received the sum of \$11,000 designated for relief work in Athens. He had this money converted into Turkish liras at the rate of 1.80.

He now has instructions to send this money to Greece immediately in the form of American dollars. He desires to know if the War Refugee Board office is in a position to accept from him the Turkish liras and to give him in exchange dollar checks in the amount of \$11,000. It would be necessary that the exchange rate be at 1.80, the rate at which it was originally converted.

VH

*11/29/44
Tues. Ryan's program
can't help in this
M*

000604

417/94
GREECE
Thessalonica

Istanbul, November 9, 1944

Welfare Department
United Nations Relief & Rehabilitation Adm.
c/o American Legation
Cairo, Egypt

Gentlemen:

We do not know whether or not you have already established a local bureau for searching for individuals in Greece, in whom relatives elsewhere are interested. However, we have been asked to give assistance in locating the following people who are the relatives of Mr. Yorgo (George) Lasaridis, whose address in Istanbul is Misir Apartment, No. 8, 303 Istiklal Caddesi.

Brother Mr. Harilaos (Hary) Lasaridis, aged 35.
Electrician of the Municipality of
Thessalonica.

Brother Mr. Yeane (Yanis) Lasaridis, aged 45.
Mechanic, Socony Vacuum Oil Co.
Thessalonica.

Brother-in-law Mr. George Vasiliadis, aged 60.
His wife, Anna, aged 48.
Rue Nea Xilina Parapigmata Kato Duba I 654,
Thessalonica.
(Office, Odos Egiptou).

Brother-in-law Mr. Kornilios Koutelas, aged 48.
His wife, Despina Koutelas, aged 43.
Their daughter, Anastasia (Sasa-Sula), aged 19.
Rue Nea Xilina Parapigmata Kato Duba I 656,
Thessalonica.

Inquiry regarding all of the above persons may be made at the Club (Leshi) Madjaroglou, Rue Duba, or at the drug-store of Dr. Karamacouna, Rue Ehnatias, Thessalonica.

000605

10/6/44
5/20/44
Ref Turkey

Istanbul, October 6, 1944

Dear Miss Cox:

Mr. Kessler mentioned to us that you had asked him to speak to us about the Israels and Gabays, who desire to emigrate to Palestine.

We had delayed replying to you as there is no definite information we can give you at this moment. The present position is that there are no Palestine emigration certificates available for people already in Turkey who desire to emigrate to Palestine. This quota of certificates, which varies from that which has been made available for refugees in other countries, has already been exhausted. We have spoken to the Jewish Agency representative in Istanbul regarding this family, and they have the matter before them.

Should the situation alter so that an additional quota of Palestine certificates is made available for residents in Turkey, we shall advise you.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Herbert Katzki
Representative
War Refugee Board

Miss Dorothy Cox
Greek War Relief
c/o American Consulate
Izmir

HK/b

000607

Istanbul, September 10, 1924

Dear John:

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

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attache

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

Enclosure

IAH:VW:B

000608

September 13, 1944

CONFIDENTIAL
From Mr. Katzki to Mr. Hirschmann

Pursuant to your instructions, on September 8, 1944 I proceeded to Izmir to investigate on the spot the feasibility of establishing an independent rescue service under War Refugee Board auspices to transport refugees from Greece to Turkey. (Mr. Joshe Verobon, representing the Palestine Rescue Committee, accompanied me.) We had previously been informed that, following the representations made by the American Embassy at Ankara at the request of the War Refugee Board, instructions had been sent from Ankara via the Turkish Secret Police 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 previously 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 Secret Police, and we were informed that no instructions had been received from Ankara authorizing the opening of a base. However, the police had been instructed by Ankara at an earlier time (I do not have the exact date) to grant all facilities to refugees coming by sea to the Turkish coast from Greece, by refraining 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 100 refugees from Greece, according to our information, have already arrived in Turkey

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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 therefor will shortly be obviated, as a result of recent developments in Greece. This refers to the evacuation by the German military of Greek islands, which is now taking place, and which, one may expect, will shortly take place on the Greek mainland. However, if Ankara should instruct the police to make a base available, they of course would do so.

I spoke with Mr. Ellis A. Johnson, Vice-Consul in Charge of the American Consulate in Izmir. I discussed our plan with him. In his view, had these proposed steps been taken six months ago, they might have had value. 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 War Relief Association in Izmir, 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 open a base under War Refugee Board auspices. The time for this is past.

I also spoke with the U.S.S. representative in Izmir. 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.

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He likewise was of the opinion that the time had passed when independent operations by the War Refugee 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 time-lag between the initial steps for preparing the base and the time when refugees might be awaited 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 creating a base, staffing it, supplying it, et cetera. Such inquiry indicated that, given sufficient time, a base could be put in operation. However, there was no way for determining in advance how long this period might be.

In view of the various opinions and other expressions of opinion which had been received in Istanbul from informed persons, it would seem 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. To pursue the matter again through Ankara would probably consume still more time, and we have before us the opinion of the local 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

000611

Istanbul, December 13, 1944

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

Major Hauer turned from Izmir. No instructions
were given by the Turkish officials in Izmir
for the equipment of a base. Hauer's report indi-
cates conclusively, however, that the situation at
the present time does not warrant the introduction
of an independent service conducted by the War Ref-
ugees.

The enclosed suggested telegram to Washington
covers the situation.

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann

Honorable Laurence A. Trainhardt
Ambassador to Turkey
American Embassy
Ankara

Encl.

IA/b

000613

FOIA(b) 5-DT

August 30, 1944

EMB 144

Subject: 800 Jewish refugees from Greece without Turkish visas.

000614

Istanbul, August 10, 1944

Dear Mr. Archer:

I wish to thank you for the courtesy of your reply of July 31 relative to the situation of the Jews in Greece, and the message contained therein from the Grand Rabbi of Athens. We hope to be able to provide some assistance in connection with the situation in Greece and we are grateful to you for the information contained in the Cohen report.

If we are able to learn anything of additional usefulness we shall certainly pass it on to you and to Sir William. Please extend to him also my warm personal regards.

Cordially yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attache

Laird Archer, Esquire
Chief of the Greece Mission
United Nations Relief and
Rehabilitation Administration
8, Sharia Dar El-Shifa
Garden City, Cairo
Egypt

000617

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION

8, SHARIA DAR EL-SHIFA - GARDEN CITY - CAIRO

31 July 1944

I. A. Hirschmann, Esquire
c/o American Embassy
Istanbul, Turkey

Dear Mr. Hirschmann:

In reply to your letter of July 20 we have had some additional word on the situation of Jews in Greece in a confidential message from the Grand Rabbi through certain American military channels which is as follows:

"The following message was sent by the Grand Rabbi of Athens to President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, Rabbi Wise of New York, the Grand Rabbi of Cairo and Jerusalem and the Jewish Agency.

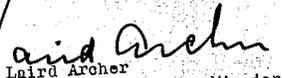
"I am appealing to Jewish philanthropic agencies to send clothing, food, and medicine and ask your assistance. Ninety thousand Jews have been expatriated; 10,000 manage to survive in refuge or hiding places. The refugees are in desperate situation for lack of food and as a result of disease. All their property has been confiscated by the Gestapo."

We suggested that the American agency transmit the message to your agency and you and we gave our Washington Headquarters the benefit of the information.

I think generally the information in the Cohen report, however, is accurate and insofar as I am informed on the situation his recommendations seem sound. The report originated with Mr. Cohen and his brother as a result of their own great interest and was in no sense official, although one of the brothers is an employee of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The copy was brought to us for our general information as affecting the planning of UNRRA for relief operations in Greece after liberation. The Cohen brothers are well regarded by those who knew them in Greece.

I hope that your very difficult work is going along as well as possible under the circumstances and Sir William joins me in all best regards.

Sincerely yours,


Laird Archer
Chief of the Greece Mission

000618

Istanbul, August 7, 1944

Mr. Eric Cox:

I enclose form of the location service of the UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Administration, requesting information on the recent whereabouts of Sam Hain, a Jew, and his wife, Mrs. Hain, formerly of London, England, who were sent to us by Dr. Hirschmann, Chief of the Welfare Department of the Government of the State of Palestine.

Mr. Hirschmann advises us that the UNRWA has made inquiry on this case through the Red Cross, but requests our assistance in the matter.

We have no records concerning the names of Jews who were deported from Palestine to the State of Palestine, and we are unable to provide information on this matter. We are, however, in contact with the British Consulate, Amman, and we will endeavor to obtain information on this matter. We will also endeavor to obtain information on this matter from the British Consulate, Amman, and we will also endeavor to obtain information on this matter from the British Consulate, Amman.

Very truly yours,

I. A. Hirschmann
Special Attaché

Mr. Eric Cox
Chief of Relief
c/o American Consulate
Izmir

Enclosure

HK/b

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

000614

Istanbul, August 7, 1944

Dear Mr. Reinmann:

We recently received your letter of July 18, in which you enclosed a form requesting information as to the present whereabouts of Sam and Benveniste and Vital and Leonida. The War Refugee Board has no record of the names of people who might have come to Izmir from Salonika. It was our opinion, however, that a person closer to the scene might be better able to assist you in finding some trace of these two brothers. Accordingly, we have sent the form to Miss Dorothy Cook, who is representative of the United Nations Relief in Izmir, with the request that she write to you directly concerning the outcome of her investigations. We are addressing her in care of the American Consulate in Izmir.

Very truly yours,

J. A. Hirschmann
Special Attache

Mr. Morris Reinmann, Chief
Relief Department
United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
North African Refugee Center
c/o British Consulate
Casablanca, Morocco

ms/b

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United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
NORTH AFRICAN REFUGEE CENTER
c/o British Consulate
Casablanca, Morocco

13 July 1944

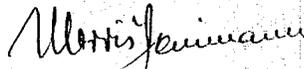
Dear Mr. Hirschman:

As you know, many of our residents have relatives with whom they have not been in communication for some time and whose addresses they therefore wish to trace. We have asked them to fill out applications for this purpose and enclose herewith a copy of one from BENVENISTE Y BENALI Mair in reference to BENVENISTE Sam Mair and Vital.

We have made an inquiry on this case through the Red Cross. But we shall be grateful if you could assist us further in this matter.

With many thanks,

Yours sincerely,



Morris Feinmann, Chief
Welfare Department

Mr. Ira Hirschman
War Refugee Board
American Embassy
Ankara, Turkey

chb
Enclosure: Application as stated.

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For Mr. Kelley's notation.

Please return to Mr. Hirschman.

Take to Hirschman

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COPY

PARAPHRASE

1. THE FOLLOWING APPEAL HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE GRAND RABBI OF ATHENS. IT IS FELT BY LAIRD ARCHER THAT IRA HIRSCHMANN OF THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD AT YOUR END SHOULD RECEIVE A COPY
2. THE MESSAGE WAS TRANSMITTED VIA THE ALLIED MISSION RADIO AND WAS ADDRESSED TO THE GRAND RABBIS, JERUSALEM AND CAIRO, ROOSEVELT, RIBBI, WISE, CHURCHILL AND THE JEWISH AGENCY.
3. THE MESSAGE READS AS FOLLOWS: I AM REQUESTING THE ASSISTANCE OF ALL JEWISH PHILANTHROPIC AGENCIES TO SEND FOOD, MEDICINE AND CLOTHING. 90,000 JEWISH PEOPLE ARE EXILED, 10,000 MORE ARE NOW IN HIDING OR HAVE MANAGED TO SURVIVE IN REFUGE. THE SHORTAGE OF FOOD AND THE PRESENCE OF DISEASE IS SERIOUS. THE GESTAPO HAVE CONFISCATED THEIR HOMES AND PROPERTY.

please refer to S.A.H.

000623

August 4, 1944

GREECE

Our best information is that there are between five and eight thousand Jewish people in Greece who for the present at least are in comparative safety, either in bands of, or in territory controlled by, the EAM. There are also approximately 2,000 in hiding in Athens and the vicinity. The latter number is being continually reduced by the work of the Gestapo 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 through evacuation was exceedingly difficult, and it required some time before an organization could be set up for that purpose and put into operation. The use of three or four kayaks was secured, with that of the necessary Greek boat captains who knew Greek territorial waters intimately, and the movement of Jewish people 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, 1943, to the end of June, 1944.

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| October through December, 1943 | 300 |
| January, 1944 | 8 |
| February | 25 |
| March | 62 |
| April | 173 |
| May | 74 |
| June | <u>104</u> |
| Total | 746 |

Towards the end of June, the rescue work broke down because

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of the lack of a base in Turkey at which the refugees could be debarked. In consequence, no Jewish refugees arrived from Greece during the month of July, and it was not until August 1 that news was received in Istanbul that a further contingent of 40 persons arrived in Turkey and were at Izmir.

We are 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 Athens to Euboea, an island off the Greek mainland, with the assistance of the EAM while en route to Euboea and while waiting there. To bring these refugees from hiding in Athens to Euboea to congregate there would be dangerous for the refugees, unless their arrival in Euboea could be timed to meet ships sent to Euboea to evacuate them. The chief problem, therefore, continues to be transportation from the east coast of Euboea to the Turkish coast, for which a Turkish "base" is required. The movement from Euboea could be regularized if there were a "base" on the Turkish coast where these people could land and where the ships could be refuelled. Such a "base" would serve as a point of communications with Greece.

We are informed that boats are available and an organization is set up, and it is only the question of a base which must be met.

Greeks now "officially" brought to Turkey are transported to Turkey because of their qualifications from a military point of view. Apparently there is agreement among various governments to permit their passage through Turkey to join Allied or Greek forces, and only those persons are included in these operations who are of military interest. It would be helpful if the

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category of people permitted facilities to Turkey from Greece could include people who are Jewish refugees. This would simplify some of the problems which indeed are now being met, but whose elimination would make the movement of refugees to Turkey much simpler.

000626

Istanbul, July 30, 1944

Dear Mr. Archer:

Upon my return to Ankara from the United States, I was requested to make some recommendations with regard to steps which might be undertaken as a result of the confidential report on "The Rescue of Jews Remaining in Greece", written by Mr. Alfred H. Cohen in Cairo.

May I say that the report is immensely absorbing. I should appreciate it if you could add any observations, on the basis of your own knowledge of the Greek situation, for my guidance, and at the same time indicate on whose initiative the report was developed.

Please remember me warmly to Sir William Matthews.

Cordially yours,

I. S. Hirschmann

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
c/o American Legation
Cairo, Egypt

Attention: Mr. Archer

000621

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

c/o American Consulate General
Istanbul, Turkey.
July 13, 1944.

Mr. Ira A. Hirschmann
War Refugee Board
c/o American Consulate General,
Istanbul

Dear Mr. Hirschmann:

Enclosed you will find a report which was prepared by Mr. Alfred H. Cohn of Cairo at my request. Mr. Cohn is on detached service with the Greek Army and is the legal adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Greece. There are a number of matters in connection with this report which I should like to discuss with you and I shall await your call.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Reuben B. Resnik
REUBEN B. RESNIK

AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

1 enclosure.

000628

CONF. ~~SECRET~~

*File
Greek*

MEMORANDUM

The Rescue of Jews Remaining in Greece

A

The Present Situation of Jews in Greece

I. Deportation of Jews from Northern Greece.

Jews of all the Communities in Macedonia (except those of Kastoria) and Thrace were deported about a year ago. They represent 3/4 of Hellenic Judaism. According to information received from reliable sources, it is unlikely that the majority of them will survive.

II. The same measures leading to extermination have since been extended to the rest of the country.

Towards the end of September 1943, after the downfall of Italy, German measures of extermination were extended to the remainder of Greece. There were, therefore, 20 to 25,000 Jews in distress still in Greece seven months ago, living in the following towns:

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Athens | Arta |
| Halkis | Preveza |
| Volos | Corfu |
| Larissa | Zante |
| Triccala | Patras |
| Karditsa | Candia |
| Yannina | Heraclion |
| Kastoria | Rethymon |

III. The condition of the Jews in Athens at the time of the application of Anti-Jewish measures.

The condition in which the Jews of Athens found themselves at the time of the application of Anti-Jewish measures was essentially different from that which confronted those living in the provincial towns.

It is estimated that in September 1943, the number of Jews in Athens was from 8 to 9,000, of which about one half were residents of the capital and the other half, refugees who had escaped from Macedonia mainly from Salonica. The residents of Athens had the advantage of

having

REGRADED
UNCLASSIFIED

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having numerous friends and acquaintances who helped them to hide; also their fortunes were still intact; but they had the disadvantage of being easily traced by the local Gestapo agents, and a small number of malefactors interested in blackmailing. On the other hand those who had escaped from Salonika lacked sufficient support in Athens; most of them having never been there before, found it very difficult to hide. Moreover, most of their property was left in Salonika where it had been confiscated by the Germans. Thus, a great number amongst them were without funds. Under these circumstances it must be very difficult, if not impossible for them to continue hiding in Athens.

IV. How many Jews are still hiding in Athens?

It is impossible to know at present the number of Jews still hiding in Athens. However, a conservative estimate would be about 5,000 if one takes into account:

(a) Those who have been registered by the Gestapo, those who have been interned and deported are believed to be 700, although other information claims it to be 2,000.

(b) Those who have, up to the present time reached the Middle East, do not exceed 400.

(c) Those who have since the beginning scattered either in the Peloponessus or in other regions controlled by Partisans.

V. Difficulties existing for Jews still hiding in Athens.

After seven months of life under such exceptional conditions, most of the Jews must by now be short of money, which greatly endangers their relative safety. Only those possessing money have any hopes of escaping the present persecution, in which the life of every Jew is threatened either in one way or another. It is true that under these circumstances, the solidarity and unanimous support of all classes of the Greek people were manifested towards the Jews. Nevertheless, as must be expected, there are a number of secret agents of the Gestapo and blackmailers, who are extremely dangerous. Moreover, one must consider that:

(a) living conditions in occupied Greece, particularly in Athens, are such that those who assume the risks of harboring Jews must rightly obtain a material compensation which will permit them to provide for their own needs.

(b)

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(b) Jews in hiding are deprived of ration cards issued by the I.R.C.C., which means that they must obtain these provisions at fabulous prices on the black market.

(c) they must face other extraordinary expenses, i.e. obtaining false identity cards, attempts of escaping which turn out to be unsuccessful, etc.

(d) the presumption that every Jew is rich and possesses large quantities of gold aggravates their difficulties.

(e) the fact that they have been living hidden and hunted has no doubt diminished their self-confidence, thus rendering them incapable of making clear and adequate decisions in the face of the many dangers they no doubt encounter.

(f) they have absolutely no possibility of earning their own living.

VI. The fate of the Jews in the provincial towns.

There is no information whatsoever on the fate of Jews in the provincial towns. It is only known that those of Halkis and Volos have abandoned their homes and joined the Partisans in those districts. It is presumed that the Jews of Larissa, Trikala, Karditsa, Arta, Preveza, Yannina, Kastoria and Patras, knowing the fate of their fellow Jews of Salonika and other Macedonian and Thracian towns, must have done likewise.

The Jews from the provincial towns, who have been able to join the Partisans run less risk of being exterminated by the Germans. The Germans, not having sufficient forces, have up to now avoided systematic pursuit of the guerrillas; they have tacitly abandoned the administration of many districts so long as their lines of communication are not interfered with. But, of course, living conditions are not easy there and food difficulties are great.

VII. The conditions of the Jews on the Islands.

The Jews living in Corfu and Zante had no possibility of joining the Partisans nor had they any serious chance of hiding. As to those of Crete, it is reported that in March-April 1943, they had not been interned nor deported as those living in the other German occupied regions of Greece, probably due to transportation difficulties.

However,

However, according to recent unconfirmed information, the Jews of Iseraqlion were all massacred in fields outside the town, several months ago.

As to the Jews of Rhodes and Cos, according to information from positive sources, until last February no drastic anti-Semitic measures had yet been put into effect.

B

A plan to come to their urgent aid and an account of the difficulties to overcome

VIII. The fundamental condition for a successful plan in rescuing the Jews.

The fundamental condition for a successful rescue Plan for Jews still living in Greece lies in close and active collaboration of:

- (a) the Free Greek Government
- (b) the various Greek Underground and Resistance Organizations
- (c) the War Refugee Board
- (d) U.S.R.R.A.
- (e) all Jewish Organizations interested in saving Jews.

IX. The Conference at present being held in the Middle East is an opportunity to bring up this matter.

An exceptional opportunity for the coordination of all efforts which are actually being displayed from various sources presents itself in connection with the conference which is being held in the Lebanon between the Free Greek Government and representatives of all Greek political parties and Resistance Organizations. It is, therefore, necessary that the question of saving the Jews be put forward at this conference and it is hoped that the opportunity will not be missed.

X. Necessity of obtaining accurate information.

The first important step is to get accurate information on the conditions of Jews living at present in Athens and in the country. With regard to the latter no information whatsoever has reached us since the putting into effect of the anti-Jewish measures.

Chiefly it is indispensable to know:

(a)

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- (a) the number of Athenian Jews who have been interned or deported.
- (b) the number of Jews arrested, given away, or executed since the intensification of the persecution (by the end of March 1944) and the number of those who were compelled to report to the Gestapo since then.
- (c) what did the Jews do when the civilian population was compelled to renew their identity cards at the beginning of the year? Is it possible to obtain false identity cards under the new German regulations on the matter? Is it possible to find out if the Jews hiding in Athens were able to obtain these cards through the underground organizations?
- (d) does the Quisling Jewish Communal Council set up by the Germans still exist? What do their activities consist of?
- (e) do the Germans use the services of the few Jewish traitors (Masson, etc.) who, according to rumors, were brought to Athens?
- (f) what were the results of the Archbishop's attempt to have war invalids, infants, the aged, etc., exempted?
- (g) have all the Jews actually evacuated Halkis, Volos, Larissa, Karditsa, Trikala, Arta, Preveza, Jannina, Kastoria, and Patras to join the Partisans?
- (h) from what provincial towns, if any, have the Jews been unable to escape to the hills? How many of them were interned, deported, or massacred in each of these towns?
- (i) which regions controlled by Partisans are mainly giving shelter to Jews? Are they grouped or dispersed? Under what conditions have they been living until the present? What is their health status? Have they any funds?
- (j) what is actually known about the conditions of Jews in Corfu and Zante? (most likely information could be obtained from the Allied Services in Southern Italy and from Partisans operating in Northern Epirus, Albania).
- (k) what are the conditions of Jews in Crete, Candia, Heraklion, and Rethymon? Have they been interned, deported, massacred, or have they been able to join the Partisans in the hills?

(1)

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- (1) how many Jews from Salonika have been fighting with Partisans in the Olympus region since April 1945? Are there any women and children with them?

XI. What can be done for Jews in Athens on practical grounds.

- (a) Provide them with false identity cards, complying with new regulations.
- (b) Grant material aid both to those wishing to leave the town as well as to those having plausible reasons for remaining.
- (c) Find shelter for those who are compelled to leave their present refuge.
- (d) relieve the burden of the parents by admitting to children institutions infants who hinder or render impossible their moving about from one place to another, thereby jeopardizing the life of the entire family.
- (e) advise, help and direct the evacuation of the greatest possible number of Jews from the Athens area; the smaller the number of Jews remaining in Athens, the greater the chances of security for those unable to move, those going in the vicinity to regions controlled by Partisans enjoy better living conditions, more safety, provided they receive regular financial support, sufficient food and medicines. For security and other reasons they should, of course be scattered as much as possible. At a later date means of helping them escape to the Middle East might be considered.
- (f) organize more systematically the escapes by caiques and improve the means of such escapes by sea.
- (g) carefully avoid mention of the Jewish Problem in clandestine press, as the reaction of the Gestapo would cause more harm than the benefit to be derived.
- (h) endeavor to spread the idea that it is an anti-national attitude to exploit the Jews in hiding. Such exploitation generally ends in giving away of the poorer class of Jews.

XII. The sending of funds may greatly contribute to the rescuing work.

The above outline sufficiently illustrates that one of the most effective ways of contributing to the rescuing of Jews still in Greece is to provide them with funds.

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These funds should be entrusted to reliable persons who will see that the money reaches the needy.

XIII. Difficulties to be met with in the execution of the above scheduled assistance.

The putting into effect of the above-mentioned proposals would present many difficulties:

(a) the addresses of harbored Jews are not, of course, known, nor those giving refuge to them and those who know people sheltering them are obviously careful not to reveal it.

(b) Jews and Christians are mistrustful of unknown persons offering to help them; thus, for instance, any good advice or offer of assistance will be met with extreme caution fearing it may be a trap set by the Gestapo.

(c) it will often be difficult to convince them to separate members of the same families (i.e. old from young, invalids from the physically fit); in most cases such a separation would give greater security to both sides.

(d) the small number of people taking advantage of the situation in which the Jews in Athens find themselves at present have from the very beginning spread rumors of imaginary dangers on evacuating the capital. Ever since October last, these alarming rumors were being spread on one hand by the organizers of departures to the hills, and on the other hand, by the organizers of departures for the Middle East, with the result that most of the Jews preferred to remain on the spot.

(e) owing to the unavoidable circumstances due in most cases to the different intermediaries, it is most likely that financial help will eventually reach its ultimate destination in a much more reduced amount.

XIV. Means of overcoming the foregoing difficulties.

The difficulties mentioned above will have to be overcome with all the moral and material resources at our disposal.

(a) Above all, we must enlist the support of the Orthodox Church whose high prestige, together with her various activities, was so helpful last October. All existing organizations working in the underground or openly, who have greatly contributed in sparing the Jews from Nazi extermination, should be required to cooperate.

(b)

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(b) The Church, professional organizations and underground groups obviously know a great number of Jews now in hiding as well as Christians sheltering Jews or being indirectly connected with them. The few Jews who have contracted mixed marriages and therefore are not subject to anti-Jewish measures must be able to trace their relatives and friends. The 400 refugees who have arrived in the Middle East could also give us some information. The Catholic Church has also helped shelter Jews.

(c) for security purposes it would be unwise to disclose their hiding places. The only indication to be given should be the addresses of people likely to know them. All this work would have to be divided and decentralized. Lists of names must not be issued as they would be detrimental not only to the Jews themselves but also to their Christian friends who are trying to help them. No doubt the experience of the underground organizations would be of great value in this matter.

(d) In order to ensure the equal distribution of funds a process of receipts should be established whereby no name of the disburser should appear on the receipt, but only the sum, date and signature of the recipient. This would prevent abuses, the intermediaries realising that the distribution is subject to control. This process, of course, would not completely exclude abuses, but would limit them.

(e) In Athens at least, funds should be distributed in gold sovereigns because of the continual depreciation of the local currency.

(f) The Greek Police of Athens may be of great help (identity cards, watching developments of German measures and warning the people in time.) But, one must be careful of the few blackmailers or Gestapo agents working inside the Police. Other officials linked with the present Rally Government are likely to do their best in favor of the Jews.

XV. Difficulties and risks of individual (non-organized) attempts to escape by sea.

Generally speaking no one in Athens knows how escapes by caiques are effected. The reason is that those who attempt to escape and do succeed, most often have no means of informing their friends of the procedure and, on the other hand, individuals belonging to organizations who have contacts with the Middle East have very good reasons

for

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for giving no information whatsoever. Thus, these escapes are shrouded in an atmosphere of great mystery, apprehension, overwhelming difficulties and enormous risks. With a sound knowledge of the route to follow, the help of local inhabitants in one or two places, courage and initiative, the chances of success are great. This has been proved by the fact that whole families (infants, invalids, old people) have managed a successful escape in the middle of the winter.

The greatest difficulty is to find the road leading to the places of embarkation along the coast. This is not easy for people in hiding.

By trusting unknown intermediaries or even the captain of a caique, the risk of falling into a trap set by the Gestapo is always present.

A further risk is that the intermediary who is pretending to arrange for an escape is actually only trying to exploit the person, but in this case the harm is not so great if the escapee is eventually conducted to the embarkation point; they then have a chance of being sooner or later put on board a caique. This is what has happened to most Jews who have managed to escape from Greece. However, their stay in the coastal area can be a very difficult one if their sailing is delayed and they have not sufficient funds to buy food with, etc...

Another risk is that the caique may be in poor shape, too small a motor, badly equipped or a shipper with no previous experience in crossings. In such a case, of course, the crossing may be fatal.

All these escapes have to be arranged through a number of intermediaries and each one is interested in making a profit; thus, the amount of money requested is very often much higher than the price one can afford. In October 1943, while a Christian could arrange his escape for one or two gold sovereigns, a Jew would be asked at least ten to twenty and sometimes fifty or more per person. Owing to the present conditions in Greece, such sums are available to a small number of Jews only. What frequently happens is that those possessing the money do not have the required courage and vice versa.

The greatest risk of the whole adventure is the crossing of the Evoikos straits which is constantly patrolled by German guards

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guards on the look out for boats. Hence the reason for crossing the straits at night which takes approximately 4 hours owing to the swift sea.

The crossing of the Aegean Sea by caiques leaving via the East Coast of the Attica renders the trip much simpler but longer. The greatest difficulty lies in the essentiality of coordinating the simultaneous arrival of boats and escaping parties, as there are no camping facilities on the coast of East Attica.

The above-mentioned notes are aimed at showing as clearly as possible the need for a systematic organization to enable Jews in overcoming difficulties and avoiding unnecessary risks.

XVI. Suggestions about measures to be taken in order to facilitate escapes by sea.

Personal experience leads us to make the following suggestions:

(a) No synchronization must be sought between departures from Athens and sailing from the coast of Euboea, which at present moment is practically impossible. It would be advisable to direct as many Jews as possible from Athens to Euboea, provided sufficient boats have been secured.

(b) Disperse them among the various villages of the region and send them to the coast only in small groups according to the facilities of evacuation by caiques existing at the time. For security purposes concentrations of refugees on the coast must be avoided.

(c) In order that evacuation of Jews from Athens to the regions of departure may be undertaken with the greatest possible safety it is necessary to have reliable assistance. There are local people affiliated to secret organizations who exercise supervision, give useful advices, procure means of transportation, etc. Generally, they are considered as trustworthy people who also must have some remuneration adequate to the services rendered. Their collaboration in connection with assistance to Jews should be rewarded.

(d) The coastal region of Euboea from which caiques sail is very poor; the villagers can hardly afford their own livelihood; transit and prolonged sojourn of numerous groups of refugees aggravate the shortage of foodstuffs. These conditions

lead

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lead to a tremendous increase in prices which is of no importance for the few well-to-do, but greatly endangers the existence of the others. It must be added that the solidarity which should be expected among the refugees is very often lacking; the predominant feeling being "everyone for oneself".

(e) The Partisans who occupied the region in October last tried to enforce a little order in connection with the transit of Jews. But it seems that they have withdrawn recently further north leaving part of the sector in the hands of armed police of the Greek quisling Government. This alteration has increased the difficulties. Among the men of this force, who is armed by the Germans and who is supposedly fighting communism, there must be numerous spies working for the Gestapo. Under such conditions points of embarkation must be moved further north.

According to refugees recently arrived in the Middle East, the following regrettable incident occurred a few weeks ago:

At the moment of sailing, a caique was prevented from doing so by a group of Partisans; all the refugees aboard were searched; all their personal belongings, gold, etc. were taken from them and they were told that they (the Jews) should be contented to save themselves without trying to save their possessions as well! Such an incident seems entirely inconsistent with the activity and help shown towards the Jews by the Partisans from the beginning. So, it may be presumed that they were not Partisans but ordinary malefactors. However, it is hoped that this will be the only incident of its kind; but it is a bad example and deserves full attention.

XVII. Arrangements for the improvement of camping conditions of refugees in the coastal zone.

In order to relieve the refugees during their usually delayed stay in the area from which the departures take place and in view of the prospective increase of the number of Jews in transit in Euboea it is essential:

(a) to send supplies for villagers who feed the refugees and for the refugees themselves. For example, on their way back the caiques might carry the necessary foodstuffs. In the past, supplies were sometimes sent to the population of these regions. Wheat, corn, potatoes, onions, olives and figs would be appreciated.

(b)

(b) to grant material assistance to the refugees in need waiting for the arrival of a boat. It may perhaps be more convenient if part of the help to be granted was given in the local currency so as to avoid strengthening the feeling that all Jews are wealthy and possess gold.

XVIII. The necessity of improving the solidarity and the good sentiments of the native villagers; suggested message to be addressed to them.

The population in this area is poor, rather ignorant, but honest by nature. These villagers having passively or actively helped for the past three years in the traffic with the Middle East feel that they are thus contributing to the war effort. Since last October, not only Greek or allied officers have passed through to join the fighting forces, or bring valuable information, but also groups of men, women and children who are not directly connected with the war; these are the Jewish refugees. All they know about them is that Jews are different from the rest of the people. Why are they escaping? Why are they being persecuted by the Germans? They do not understand the reason for this persecution. The Partisans have asked them to help these Jews; their school teachers have sometimes tried to explain to them that these people are equally brothers in arms, and since the common enemy -- the Germans -- is persecuting them, they must also be helped; they must accommodate and feed them though payment may sometimes be impossible. The Partisans, however, are not always natives of the area they rule and accordingly they are not fully trusted by the villagers. Another thing: "Jews are presumably rich," thus the opportunity for profiteering.

It is obvious that under such conditions a message from the Free Greek Government would be of the greatest utility. The Greeks have a very highly developed sense of personal pride. This characteristic should be stimulated. They could be reminded that the Christian religion says "love thy neighbor"; "all men are equal"; "those who suffer should be helped"; Jews are equally Greek. One of them, a gallant officer--native of Nafis, the capital of their own island--was killed in action in the Albanian war; thousands of Greek Jews defended their land against the invaders, hundreds amongst them were killed, and it is upon these people that the Germans

have

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have concentrated their hatred using the most horrible means at their disposal. They are determined to exterminate them because Jews are declared enemies of Nazism. Besides, Jews all over the world are friends of Greece and the day is close when they will actively show what they can do to help realize the national Greek claims, as well as relieve and restore the country ruined by the invaders. It is, therefore, a national and patriotic duty as well as a question of honor to help Greek Jews in every possible way. It could also be mentioned that the help given up to now to Jews by the inhabitants of this region is well known in competent circles and that moral and material reward will be forthcoming as a reward to those deserving it.

An appeal embodying the above-mentioned principles should be read in all the villages of the district. It would be preferable not to distribute leaflets which may fall into the hands of the Germans who would adopt measures of reprisals.

XIX. The necessity of increasing the small number of boats for the rescue of refugees.

The efforts to be made for encouraging the evacuation of the Jews from Athens in directing them towards the coast would be useless and even harmful if simultaneously arrangements were not made to provide an adequate number of boats.

Considering the geographical position of Greece, which is one of the best in occupied Europe, the number of escapes have been very few. The Jewish refugees who have escaped to the Middle East during the last 7 months have not exceeded 400, which comes to an average of about 2 Jews being rescued per day. One must point out that a good many of these Jewish refugees reach the Turkish coast through private arrangements of their own.

The Smyrna Allied Authorities have at their disposal many caiques of different sizes, the smallest being able to hold 20 passengers and the largest 80. Since last October there has been much talk about a Jewish Organization employing 2 caiques; some even talked of 5 boats. Actually, we have not as yet heard of any Jew crossing the Aegean Sea in one of these caiques. Besides, if there really existed 5 or even 2 caiques for the exclusive use of the Jewish Organization, we should have been able in seven

months

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months time to save a much greater number of Jews. One must reckon that most probably the Jewish Organization itself does not run any boat but has an agreement with some of the captains of caiques to take refugees on board with the promise of being generously rewarded. Such arrangement which seems to help the rescuing of the Jews is still quite inadequate. The good will of the captains in itself is not sufficient; a great deal depends as well on competent officials residing in Smyrna; a captain of a caique will not undertake the crossing unless he is ordered to; he is also instructed as to the number of passengers he is allowed to take on board and as to the point of the Greek coast from which he will sail. On the other hand, it must be remembered that it does not rest with the Smyrna authorities to rescue the Jews, their attributions being of a military character. Besides, the increase of the number of refugees is in some way considered as a danger to the main activities of the above-mentioned service.

These are at present the chief difficulties in rescuing Jews through the Aegean Sea. Under the above-mentioned conditions it is suggested to have the War Refugee Board take this matter up with the competent military Authorities in order to reach a satisfactory agreement to both sides. Furthermore, the rescue of the Jews must not continue to remain any further an auxiliary duty but a systematic and efficient effort to be met with full attention.

XX. Utility of questioning every refugee upon his arrival in the Middle East.

The work of rescuing Jews in Athens would be greatly facilitated if the office of the War Refugee Board in Smyrna would organize an Information Department for the questioning of each refugee upon arrival.

- (a) On relatives and friends remaining in Greece.
- (b) On the conditions under which they are hiding.
- (c) How they can be traced, what help they need, etc.

The information thus confidentially obtained would be extremely useful. Should this information be gathered in Palestine instead of Turkey, a delay of over a month would be caused.

XXI.

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XXI. Help to be given to Jewish Refugees from the provincial towns at present living in regions occupied by Partisans.

(a) First of all it is necessary to obtain the information referred to in Para X (a through d) in order to know the scope of this special problem.

(b) Financial assistance should be organized according to the number and the living conditions of Jewish refugees. Distribution of this assistance should be made under the supervision of the local Partisan Organization; this task will be more difficult where the Jewish refugees are not mixed or even grouped together.

(c) Organize the supply and distribution of foodstuffs, vitamins and medicines where they are most needed, with the collaboration of the local Partisan Organization.

(d) A message similar to the one suggested in para XVIII should also be addressed to the populations in different sectors of the country where the Jewish refugees have taken shelter. The local Partisan Organizations could undertake the adequate publicity.

XXII. Necessity of a warning to be given by the Free Greek Government relative to the blackmailing and denunciation of Jews.

It would be very desirable if the Free Greek Government should issue an official warning to the effect that any attempt to denounce or to blackmail any citizen persecuted by the German authorities will be punished upon liberation of the country with greatest severity. All acts of this nature will be considered equivalent to acts of treason.

XXIII. The duty of every Jew without dependents and eligible for military service should be to join the Partisans.

No matter how difficult present conditions are, the duty of every Jew is to contribute in every possible way towards the liberation of the country. Thus, those who are of age, who have been through the Albanian war, or who have received military training, and are without dependents should join the Partisans; that is what most of their fellow Jews, who avoided being caught in the other occupied countries have done. Should this policy be adopted, the

number

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number of women, children and aged to be evacuated would be greater. They should also be informed that upon arrival in the Middle East they are to be enlisted for military service with the Greek Armed Forces.

by Alfred H. Cohen

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filed.

American Consulate, Izmir,
July 6, 1944.

Dear Mr. Hirschman,

In acknowledging your letter of June 20, I wish to say that I am also very sorry that we did not meet when you were in Turkey several months ago. As a matter of fact I did not know that the War Refugee Board was represented in Turkey until just before you left or I would have gotten in touch with you.

The Jews in Greece for whom we were making a special appeal at that time-- that is, those who had registered in compliance with a German order-- have, as you know, since then been sent off to an unknown destination as was foreseen.

There still remain approximately five or six thousand who, for the present at least, are in comparative safety with andart bands or in territory controlled by EAM (National Liberation Front). There are also approximately 2,000 in hiding in Athens and vicinity but the number is being continually reduced by the work of the Gestapo and by the escape of those who find the means to avoid a similar fate.

Escape from Athens to Euboea does not present great difficulties and every facility is given the refugees by EAM both while en route to Euboea and while waiting there but it would be useless for large numbers to escape from Athens unless transportation is available from Euboea to Turkey. And so the chief problem to be solved continues to be transportation for the trip of approximately 150 miles from the east coast of Euboea to the Turkish coast. Many thousands of refugees, including about one thousand Jews, have made the trip with little to fear except bad weather.

Members of small groups that continue to come say that the news of interest of our government in rescuing those subject to persecution in occupied countries has reached those in hiding and they beg that steps should be taken in their behalf. To the best of my knowledge none of the efforts made have to date resulted in any American assistance being given.

I hope that as you suggest I may have the pleasure of meeting you

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and cooperating with you. It is unlikely that I shall be in Ankara except possibly for several hours between trains in the event I leave permanently as I may do in the near future. I may be in Istanbul sometime during the summer but I think it rather improbable.

With kind regards and with best wishes for the success of your difficult tasks, I am

Very truly yours,

Homer Davis

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July 3rd, 1944.

GREECE

When I was last in Turkey I was aware of a trickle of constant movement of refugees across from Greece to Izmir, Turkey. The period of January and February is the worst possible time for traffic across these waters and the movement was so slow at that time that no report was made. So-called caiques capable of carrying 25 to a maximum of 40 passengers, ply a regular refugee traffic back and forth from the island of Evvoia to a small island adjoining Izmir. These refugees generally are removed by the so-called partisans from Athens to Evvoia and are put off on the shore at the Turkish isle. After some routine and formalities which are directed by representatives of the Jewish Agency, they secure their visas for Palestine. The Turkish police take the passengers to Izmir where the British Consulate gives them visas and they proceed by train to Palestine. Number of refugees arrived from Izmir since October, 1943 -

October, 1943 - January, 1944 - 300
January, 1944 - February, 1944 - 33

See schedule
(Mr. Kabsky, please enlarge on this operation with suggestions as to how we can help).

Americans clandestinely are represented at the above island points. The British previously assisted in these movements informally. Today this is more necessary and the British and Americans have asked to be permitted to concentrate on their own political functions in this area.

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PERMANENT OF PUBLIC RECEIPTS

June 26, 1944

WAB 58

Subject: Request for race mandation re report by Cohen on Greece.

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THE TRAGIC HISTORY OF GREEK JEWS SINCE APRIL 10, 1941.

One of the articles of the armistice concluded between the German and Greek military authorities in April 1941 specified clearly that the life and property of Greek citizens without distinction of race and religion would be respected by the armies of occupation. After signing this armistice, General Tsolakoglu who was one of the principal members of the armistice commission and one of the most important signatories, seized authority and formed the first Greek government following the capitulation. Upon several occasions the Germans urged Tsolakoglu to put into effect the Nazi laws against the Jews. In an official declaration, however, General Tsolakoglu stated that after the war the Jewish problem in Greece would be considered in its relation to the world-wide Jewish problem. Thus the Jewish question was set aside for a certain time. After the fall of the Tsolakoglu government and the appointment of the Logothetopoulos government the Jewish question came up a sin and persecutions of every degree of cruelty and barbarism began against the Jewish minority.

Forced Labor.

On July 11, 1942 the Feld Kommandantur asked all male Jews from 18 to 45 to appear in Plateia Eleftheria (Liberty Square) of Salonica to enroll for forced labor. About 10-12,000 people, including those wounded on the Albanian front, assembled in the square. In the crowd there was a large number of war victims, without eyes, without arms and without legs. At 8 a.m. S.S. officers began an inspection of the candidates for forced labor. They selected principally those persons who, from their bearing and appearance, were thought to belong to the better classes. These victims were forced, under threat of being whipped or shot, to gaze fixedly at the hot July sun for minutes at a time, without being allowed to make the slightest movement, either of eyes or body. If anyone lowered his eyes or turned his gaze aside through sheer physical necessity, he was whipped until the blood ran. After this terrible ordeal the unfortunate victims were obliged to perform physical exercises without stopping until 2 p.m., which resulted in their complete exhaustion. Anyone who stopped for an instant, because he was worn out and at the end of his strength, was struck with the whip and kicked repeatedly. Those who fainted and fell to the ground were revived by having pails of icy water poured down their backs and they were obliged to go on with the frightful exercise. This torture lasted from 8 a.m. to

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2 p.m. Each of the victims was provided with a numbered work card. Not content with the above outrages, the S.S. ordered their victims to go back to their homes and required them to run the first 150 meters or to go on on all fours, turning somersaults or rolling in the dust. Packs of police-dogs were set on the mothers, wives and children of the victims who were in the square and who could not keep from expressing their anguish by angry cries of protest.

The balconies and windows of the large buildings on Plateia Eleftheria were reserved that day for the German ladies of the city and for German officers who showed their sadistic pleasure in this frightful spectacle by enthusiastic expressions of joy and hearty applause. These spectators also took it upon themselves to photograph and film these scenes.

The conditions in which the poor devils were made to work in the unhealthy regions of western Macedonia and the hard labor that was required of them were of such a nature that most of the laborers became ill and the output of the work was noticeably affected. At this point the German commission, with the unscrupulousness which is always a characteristic of German propositions, approached the Jewish community through the mediation of the German overseer, Johannes Miller, with the proposal to exonerate the Jews of all forced labor if a ransom of 3 billion drachmes was paid. Discussions on this subject ended in an agreement contained in a document signed by an authorized representative of the German authorities, Professor Merk. In this document it was clearly stated that for a year, that is until September - October, 1943, the Jews would not be disturbed, as long as the ransom was paid at the stipulated intervals. The Jews of Salonica bled themselves white in order to pay the enormous ransom and as soon as the last installment was paid, the Germans in their usual manner forgot their written promise and in violation of their signature began the savage measures which are described below.

Not content with attacking the living Jews of Salonica, the Germans found means and excuses to attack the dead also. One fine morning the Jewish community was invited to send representatives to a commission which had been set up to expropriate the Jewish cemetery. It is not necessary to state that the Jews were obliged

to take part in this commission for the sole purpose of hearing their condemnation, and not to offer the least bit of advice. They were told that from that moment the cemetery was expropriated for the purpose of making a large park and providing roads connecting it with the various suburbs. Workers set about dismantling the tombs and disinterring the dead. Jews living in Salonica were allowed to carry away the remains of their dear ones if they arrived in time. We want to draw attention to the fact that the Salonica cemetery was of the greatest historic value, dating from the first centuries of the Christian era. There were in this cemetery very ancient grave stones with very important inscriptions. The work of destroying the cemetery was done in such haste that very few Jews succeeded in finding the remains of their families and relatives. Recently buried dead were thrown to the dogs.

Ghetto Badges and Declaration of Property.

Toward the end of February, 1943, at the moment when the last installment of the ransom was paid, the S.S. selected parts of the city in which all the Jews were to be confined. After taking all their property, the S.S. obliged the Jews to leave their homes and shut themselves up in buildings in the designated sections, threatening to shoot anyone who refused to obey the order. Beginning with children of two years, all Jews were obliged to wear on their chests a distinctive badge, which was quite large, yellow in color and represented a Magen David. This distinctive badge was called a "Cocarde". The cocarde was numbered. Jews were forbidden under penalty of death to leave the concentration area. If an exception was made and a Jew was authorized to circulate outside the ghetto, he was not allowed to make use of any transportation facilities.

After the Jews had been concentrated in the section called the Ghetto, they received printed forms upon which they were to declare their personal and real property. Under threat of terrible torture every Jew was obliged to make a most detailed declaration of everything he possessed, including furniture, clothes and underclothes. As soon as the S.S. received these forms, robbery and pillage

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were systematically carried out and within a month the unfortunate Jews were deprived of all their property and every means of support. It is impossible to describe the terrible suffering caused by all sorts of privations and abuse; the fact that 45,000 people looked upon death as their only source of relief is indicative of what they were obliged to endure.

Baron Hirsch Concentration Camp.

This camp was used as a temporary place of internment for those Jews who were to be deported as fast as cars became available. A group of 2,500 persons was first taken from the Ghetto and interned at Baron Hirsch. Thousands of people, regardless of sex, age and family were crowded into the camp pellmell, and confined under conditions so terrible from the point of view of hygiene that they cannot possibly be described. Woe to anyone who dared make the slightest timid request. There were terrible scenes - families were divided, mothers searched for their children, husbands for their wives. Children were generally left behind in the ghetto when their parents were taken to Baron Hirsch. The unfortunate inmates of Baron Hirsch were not only obliged to endure great physical suffering resulting from hunger, thirst and cold, but every evening at 10 they were forced under threat of death to dance and show every sign of gaiety, while the S.S. turned upon them the brilliant lights required for making films which would prove to the world how happy the Jews were to be under German protection. There is not time or space to enumerate in further detail the terrible sufferings which the Jews underwent at the Baron Hirsch camp.

As soon as freight cars were available, men, women and children were piled in - 70 to 80 in cars that were large enough for not more than 30 to 40 people. The hygienic conditions of these cars were deplorable; there was no ventilation; only one can of water was allowed and another can was provided for personal necessities. The ill and those suffering from tuberculosis were crowded in with the healthy. The cars were sealed!

The first transport left on March 14, 1943. The impression was given at first that only the inhabitants of the suburbs would be deported but little by little all the Jews of Salonica were sent away. No one was spared - not even women in childbirth, inmates of orphan asylums and old men's homes, or the insane. The doors of the insane asylums were opened and the inmates deported like trapped beasts. Wounded soldiers and veterans of the campaign in the Albanian mountains were taken, regardless of every effort to resist. In this way 45-50,000 people were sent away within a month to unknown destinations.

During the month, Jewish delegations, representatives of the political parties and presidents of all the Greek organizations in Athens approached Prime Minister Logothetopoulos and various Ministers, asking them to intervene, but Logothetopoulos refused to make the slightest protest, under the pretext that the Germans would remove him from office. If Logothetopoulos had wished to do so, he could have saved the Jews of Greece. However, he showed no such inclination and he even supported the Germans either through his attitude of passivity and indifference to the suffering of Greek Jews or through instructions sent secretly to the Greek provincial authorities.

The Governor-General of Macedonia, Simonides, and his officials were unmoved by the German measures against the Jews. The newspaper NEA EVROPI, whose editor-in-chief was Eliadi, published menacing articles with the express purpose of arousing the Greeks of Salonica against the Jews. The sinister Papanahoum was the head of this group of torturers. He and his accomplices have amassed large fortunes from the confiscated Jewish property and they make a public display of that fact.

However, special mention must be made of the extremely humanitarian attitude of the Orthodox Church in this tragedy. The Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, Damaskinos, whose name should be written in letters of gold in the annals of recent years, showed a spirit of sublime sacrifice and practical

understanding truly worthy of a great Pastor. It is to him that we owe the famous protest against the crimes committed against the Jews of Salonica, a protest that the Logothetopoulos government refused to make. This protest was drawn up by the Archbishop himself at the memorable reunion of the presidents of 31 organizations of Athens. The Archbishop was the first to sign the protest; the others followed.

A small committee was appointed, which, in collaboration with two Jewish delegates, spent the entire summer in preparing a system of hiding and providing means of escape for the Jews of Athens in case the same measures were taken in Athens as had been applied by the Germans in Salonica. When the Archbishop went with Professor Louvaris to present the subject to Altenburg, the German delegate for Greece, Altenburg asked them cynically not to mix in Jewish affairs, inasmuch as the decision to use the same measures of persecution against the Jews of Athens as had been employed in Salonica had been definitely and irrevocably taken.

On September 21, 1943, - that is, several weeks after the Germans took over from the Italians the direction of affairs in Athens, - the Grand Rabbi of Athens was asked to go to the Gestapo office where he was told that all Jewish property, private or community, was expropriated and that anti-racial measures would be taken immediately. He was asked to submit a detailed inventory of communal property and a list of important individuals for the purpose of forming a so-called communal council. Two days later the Grand Rabbi, through the aid of EAM, disappeared with all his relatives. Thus thwarted, the Germans appointed a commission of unimportant persons of doubtful integrity and asked the Athenian Jews to register. As could be foreseen, almost all the Jews of Athens went into hiding in the houses of Greek friends where many of them still are. Only a few poverty-stricken Jews, old men, invalids, and very rarely entire families who unfortunately had been betrayed by traitors in German service, registered. These were the Jews, 800 in number, who were seized on March 24, 1944 and thrown into the Haidari concentration camp. From there they

000654

were deported to Poland. The Greeks of Athens, who rose nobly to the occasion at the time of this tragedy are continuing to protect the Jews with a devotion which stands every test.

Little by little the Jews are finding ways to escape to a spot from which caiques take them to a place of safety.

April 27, 1944, Izmir

Samuel Szevin.

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B

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March 6, 1945

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Joseph Schwartz was received through the American Embassy in Paris under date of March 4, 1945:

"Regarding projected emigration from Greece even before receipt your cable have advised Resnik that prices excessive and that all emigration from Balkans should be handled by Pasman. Kaplan Jewish Agency agrees price excessive and has heard nothing concerning this entire project."

Very truly yours,

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

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

RBH ✓
RBHutchison: 3/6/45

000657

IN ADVANCE OF RECEIPT
THIS MESSAGE IS NOT TO BE
REPRODUCED OR TRANSMITTED
IN ANY MANNER WITHOUT THE
WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
EXCEPT AS AUTHORIZED BY
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

**INCOMING
TELEGRAM**

**DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION**

DCG-117

PLAIN

Paris

Dated March 4, 1945

Rec'd 4:16 a.m. 5th.,

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1021, Fourth

FOR MOSES LEAVIT AMERICAN JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
FROM JOSEPH SCH ARTZ

CONTROL COPY

TELEGRAPH SECTION

"Regarding projected emigration from Greece even before receipt your cable have advised Resnik that prices excessive and that all emigration from Balkans should be handled by Passman. Kaplan Jewish Agency agrees price excessive and has heard nothing concerning this entire project."

CAFFERY

MJF

000658

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

War Ref Bd
C. Sawyer

PL 1142

February 21, 1945

AMEMBASSY

CONTROL COPY

PARIS
699, Twenty-first.

Please deliver following message to Joseph Schwartz
from H. A. Leavitt of American Jewish Joint Distribution
Committee, through War Refugee Board:

QUOTE Reference Peenik's cable projected emigration
900 children 100 adults from Greece we disturbed excessive
cost \$600 per passage unless emigration of group is matter
of life and death we cannot authorize such excessive costs
even by partial participation advise your recommendations.
UNQUOTE

GREW
(Acting)
(GLW)

WRB:BMV:KG
2/21/45

WE

NE

000659

CABLE TO AMERICAN EMBASSY, PARIS, FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Please deliver following message to Joseph Schwartz from M. A.

Leavitt of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee:

QUOTE REFERENCE RESNIK'S CABLE PROJECTED EMIGRATION 900
CHILDREN 100 ADULTS FROM GREECE WE DISTURBED EXCESSIVE
COST \$600 PER PASSAGE UNLESS EMIGRATION OF GROUP IS MATTER
OF LIFE AND DEATH WE CANNOT AUTHORIZE SUCH EXCESSIVE COSTS
EVEN BY PARTIAL PARTICIPATION ADVISE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS.
UNQUOTE

copy sent to Leavitt 2/19/45

2:30 p.m.
February 17, 1945

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

RD

RDrury 2/17/45

000660

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

- To: ~~Miss Hutchison 2410~~
(1) ~~Miss Hutchison~~
(2) ~~Miss Hutchison~~
(3) Mr White 4409-N

Telephoned by
JDC 7/19/45
(3 cables)

Mr White
Pls return file
to Miss Hutchison
2410

J. W. Pehle
Assistant to the Secretary

000661

February 10, 1945

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Harold Trobe was received through the American Legation in Lisbon under date of February 9, 1945:

"JDC 163. Resnik cables 'Projected Mosad emigration scheme from Greece involves movement of 1,000 of whom 900 children 100 escorts. Proposed that first group 300 ready early March on two small vessels. At this stage cost excessive approximately \$600 per passenger from Athens to Haifa. It is reported that certificates will be made available. We are asked to participate which I recommend. If you agree indicate basis on which we can participate. Payment can be made in Palestine.' Advised Schwartz and Magnes."

Very truly yours,

E. J. H. H. H.

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

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

February 2/10/45

000662

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

PEM-598

CONTROL COPY

Lisbon

Dated February 9, 1945

Rec'd 11:44 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

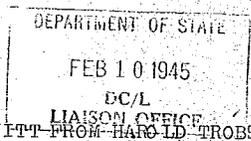
292, Ninth

WRB 397 JDC 163 FOR LEAVITT FROM HAROLD TROBE

Resnik cables "Projected Mosad emigration scheme from Greece involves movement of 1,000 of whom 900 children 100 escorts. Proposed that first group 300 ready early March on two small vessels. At this stage cost excessive approximately \$600 per passenger from Athens to Haifa. It is reported that certificates will be made available. We are asked to participate which I recommend. If you agree indicate basis on which we can participate. Payment can be made in Palestine". Advised Schwartz and Magnes.

RB

NORWEB



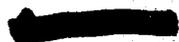
000663

*J. Van Dyke Bond
and Keller*

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Ankara
DATED: June 26, 1944
NUMBER: 571

CONTROL COPY



FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Please refer to memorandum of May 15 concerning rescue of Jews in Greece prepared by Alfred Cohen and forwarded to the Embassy in Ankara by Ambassador Mac Veagh at Cairo.

We await report from you before taking action on Cohen's recommendations.

THIS IS WAR REFUGEE BOARD CABLE TO ANKARA NO. 59.

HULL

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date DEC 6 1972

SEP 19 1972

000664

NOT TO BE RELEASED
TO THE PUBLIC
BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
DATE: 10/23/2014

SECRET

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT FOR HIRSCHMANN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Please refer to memorandum of May 15 concerning rescue of
Jews in Greece prepared by Alfred Cohen and forwarded to the Embassy
in Ankara by Ambassador Mac Veagh at Cairo.

We await report from you before taking action on Cohen's
recommendations.

This is War Refugee Board cable to Ankara No. 59.

10:05 a.m.
June 26, 1944

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

marks: 7/23/44

000665

AMERICAN EMBASSY
near the
GOVERNMENT OF GREECE

WRIS
(200)

Cairo, Egypt,
May 31, 1944.

No. 126.

Subject: Rescue of Jews from Greece.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

CONTROL COPY

Sir:

With reference to my despatch no. 113 of May 18, 1944 and previous correspondence concerning the rescue of Jews from Greece, I have the honor to transmit herewith a further memorandum on this subject dated May 15, 1944 prepared by Alfred H. Cohen, whose memorandum of April 27, 1944 in the same connection was transmitted to the Department with despatch no. 107 of May 2, 1944. The main points covered in this later memorandum, which is somewhat more detailed than the previous one, were reported in the Embassy's telegram no. 158, May 17, Noon.

A copy of this memorandum has been given to Mr. Irving S. Friedman, Treasury Department representative in Cairo, who will appreciate it if the Department will also make a copy available to the Treasury.

The Embassy is forwarding a copy of this despatch and its enclosure to the Embassy at Ankara for its information.

Respectfully yours,

Lincoln MacVeagh

Enclosure:
Memorandum.

Sent in original and hectograph to Department;
file no. 848;
LH/WE/ea.

000666

MEMORANDUM

The Rescue of Jews Remaining in Greece

A.

The Present Situation of Jews in Greece

1. Deportation of Jews from Northern Greece.

Jews of all the Communities in Macedonia (except those of Kastoria) and Thrace were deported about a year ago. They represent 3/4 of Hellenic Judaism. According to information received from reliable sources, it is unlikely that the majority of them will survive.

II. The same measures leading to extermination have since been extended to the rest of the country.

Towards the end of September 1943, after the downfall of Italy, German measures of extermination were extended to the remainder of Greece. There were, therefore, 20 to 25,000 Jews in distress still in Greece seven months ago, living in the following towns:

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| Athens | Arta |
| Halkis | Preveza |
| Volos | Corfu |
| Larissa | Zante |
| Trioccala | Patras |
| Karditsa | Candia |
| Yannina | Heraclion |
| Kastoria | Rethymon |

III. The condition of the Jews in Athens at the time of the application of Anti-Jewish measures.

The condition in which the Jews of Athens found themselves at the time of the application of Anti-Jewish measures was essentially different from that which confronted those living in the provincial towns.

It is estimated that in September 1943, the number of Jews in Athens was from 8 to 9,000, of which about one half were residents of the capital and the other half, refugees who had escaped from Macedonia mainly from Salonika. The residents of Athens had the advantage of having numerous friends and acquaintances who helped them to hide; also their fortunes were still intact; but they had the disadvantage of being easily traced by the local Gestapo agents, and a small number of malefactors interested in blackmailing. On the other hand those who had escaped from Salonika lacked sufficient support in Athens; most of them having never been there before, found it very difficult to hide. However, most of their property was left in Salonika where it had been confiscated by the Germans. Thus, a great number amongst them were without funds. Under these circumstances it must be very difficult, if not impossible for them to continue hiding in Athens.

IV. How many Jews are still hiding in Athens?

It is impossible to know the present number of Jews still

1947
State
By R. H. Parks Date
DEC 9 1972
SEP 19 1972

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in hiding in Athens. However, a conservative estimate would be about 5,000 if one takes into account:

(a) Those who have been registered by the Gestapo, those who have been interned and deported are believed to be 700, although other information claims it to be 2,000.

(b) Those who have, up to the present time reached the Middle East, do not exceed 400.

(c) Those who have since the beginning, scattered either in the Peloponnese or in other regions controlled by Partisans.

V. Difficulties existing for Jews still hiding in Athens.

After seven months of life under such exceptional conditions, most of the Jews must by now be short of money, which greatly endangers their relative safety. Only those possessing money have any hopes of escaping the present persecution, in which the life of every Jew is threatened either in one way or another. It is true that under these circumstances, the solidarity and unanimous support of all classes of the Greek people were manifested towards the Jews. Nevertheless, as must be expected, there are a number of secret agents of the Gestapo and blackmailers, who are extremely dangerous. Moreover, one must consider that:

(a) living conditions in occupied Greece, particularly in Athens, are such that those who assume the risks of harboring Jews must rightly obtain a material compensation which will permit them to provide for their own needs.

(b) Jews in hiding are deprived of ration cards issued by the I.R.C.C., which means that they must obtain these provisions at fabulous prices on the black market.

(c) they must face other extraordinary expenses i.e. obtaining false identity cards, attempts of escaping which turn out to be unsuccessful etc.

(d) the presumption that every Jew is rich and possess large quantities of gold aggravates their difficulties.

(e) the fact that they have been living hidden and hunted has no doubt diminished their self-confidence, thus rendering them incapable of making clear and adequate decisions in the face of the many dangers they no doubt encounter.

(f) they have absolutely no possibility of earning their own living.

VI. The fate of the Jews in the provincial towns.

There is no information whatsoever, on the fate of Jews in the provincial towns. It is only known that those of Halkis and Volos have abandoned their homes and joined the Partisans in those districts. It is presumed that the Jews of Larissa, Trikala, Karditsa, Arta, Preveza, Yannina, Kastoria and Patras knowing the fate of their fellow Jews of Salonika and other Macedonian and Thracian towns must have done likewise.

The Jews from the provincial towns, who have been able to join the Partisans run less risk of being exterminated by the Germans. The Germans, not having sufficient forces, have up to now avoided systematic pursuit of the Guerrillas; they have tacitly abandoned the administration of many districts so long as their lines of communication are not interfered with. But, of course,

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living conditions are not easy there and food difficulties are great.

VII. The conditions of the Jews on the Islands

The Jews living in Corfu and Lante had no possibility of joining the Partisans nor had they any serious chance of hiding. As to those of Crete, it is reported that in March-April 1943, they had not been interned nor deported as those living in the other German occupied regions of Greece, probably due to transportation difficulties. However, according to recent unconfirmed information, the Jews of Heraklion were all massacred in fields outside the town, several months ago.

As to the Jews of Rhodes and Cos, according to information from positive sources until last February no drastic anti-Semitic measures had yet been put into effect.

B.

A plan to come to their urgent aid and an account of the difficulties to overcome.

VIII. The fundamental condition for a successful plan in rescuing the Jews.

The fundamental condition for a successful Rescue Plan for Jews still living in Greece lies in close and active collaboration of:

- (a) the Free Greek Government
- (b) the various Greek Underground and Resistance Organizations
- (c) the War Refugee Board
- (d) W.N.R.R.A.
- (e) all Jewish Organizations interested in saving Jews.

IX. The Conference at present being held in the Middle East is an opportunity to bring up this matter.

An exceptional opportunity for the coordination of all efforts which are actually being displayed from various sources, presents itself in connection with the conference which is being held in the Lebanon between the Free Greek Government and representatives of all Greek political parties and Resistance Organizations. It is therefore, necessary that the question of saving the Jews be put forward at this conference and it is hoped that the opportunity will not be missed.

X. Necessity of obtaining accurate information:

The first important step is to get accurate information on the conditions of Jews living at present in Athens and in the country. With regard to the latter no information whatsoever, has reached us since the putting into effect of the anti-Jewish measures.

Chiefly it is indispensable to know:

- (a) the number of Athenian Jews who have been interned or deported.
- (b) the number of Jews arrested, given away, or executed since the intensification of the persecution (by the end of March 1944) and the number of those who were compelled to report to the Gestapo since then.
- (c) what did the Jews do when the civilian population was compelled to renew their identity cards at the beginning

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of the year? Is it possible to obtain false identity cards under the new German regulations on the matter? Is it possible to find out if the Jews hiding in Athens were able to obtain these cards through the underground Organizations.

- (d) does the existing Jewish Communal Council set up by the Germans still exist? What do their activities consist of.
- (e) do the Germans use the services of the few Jewish traitors (Masson etc) who, according to rumours were brought to Athens?
- (f) what were the results of the Archbishop's attempt to have war invalids, infants, the aged, etc., exempted?
- (g) have all the Jews actually evacuated Halkis, Volos, Larissa, Farditsa, Triccala, Arta, Preveza, Jannina, Kastoria, and Patras to join the Partisans?
- (h) from what provincial towns, if any, have the Jews been unable to escape to the hills? How many of them have been interned, deported, or massacred in each of these towns?
- (i) which regions controlled by Partisans are mainly giving shelter to Jews? Are they grouped or dispersed? Under what conditions have they been living until the present? What is their health status? Have they any funds?
- (j) what is actually known about the conditions of Jews in Corfu and Zante? (most likely information could be obtained from the Allied Services in Southern Italy and from Partisans operating in Northern Epirus, Albania)
- (k) what are the conditions of Jews in Crete, Candia, Heraklion, and Rethymon? Have they been interned, deported, massacred or have they been able to join the Partisans in the hills?
- (l) how many Jews from Salonika have been fighting with Partisans in the Olympus region since April 1943? Are there any women and children with them?

XI. What can be done for Jews in Athens on practical grounds:

- (a) Provide them with false identity cards, complying with new regulations.
- (b) grant material aid both to those wishing to leave the town as well as to those having plausible reasons for remaining.
- (c) find shelter for those who are compelled to leave their present refuge.
- (d) relieve the burden of the parents by admitting to children institutions infants who hinder or render impossible their moving about from one place to another, thereby jeopardizing the life of the entire family.
- (e) advise, help and direct the evacuation of the greatest possible number of Jews from Athens area; the smaller the number of Jews remaining in Athens, the greater the chances of security for those unable to move, those going in the vicinity to regions controlled by Partisans enjoy better living conditions, more safety, provided they receive regular financial support, sufficient food and medicines.

For security

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- (e) For security and other reasons they should of course be scattered as much as possible. At a later date means of helping them escape to the Middle East might be considered.
- (f) organize more systematically the escapes by caiques and improve the means of such escapes by sea.
- (g) carefully avoid mention of the Jewish problem in clandestine press, as the reaction of the Gestapo would cause more harm than the benefit to be derived.
- (h) endeavor to spread the idea that it is an anti-national attitude to exploit the Jews in hiding. Such exploitation generally ends in giving away of the poorer class of Jews.

XII. The sending of funds may greatly contribute to the rescuing work.

The above outline sufficiently illustrates that one of the most effective ways of contributing to the rescuing of Jews still in Greece is to provide them with funds.

These funds should be entrusted to reliable persons, who will see that the money reaches the needy.

XIII. Difficulties to be met with in the execution of the above scheduled assistance.

The putting into effect of the above mentioned proposals would present many difficulties:

(a) the addresses of harbored Jews are not, of course, known, nor those giving refuge to them and those who know people sheltering them are obviously careful not to reveal it.

(b) Jews and Christians are mistrustful of unknown persons offering to help them; thus for instance any good advice or offer of assistance will be met with extreme caution fearing it may be a trap set by the Gestapo.

(c) it will often be difficult to convince them to separate members of the same families (i.e. old from young, invalids from the physically fit); in most cases such a separation would give greater security to both sides.

(d) the small number of people taking advantage of the situation in which the Jews in Athens find themselves at present have from the very beginning spread rumors of imaginary dangers on evacuating the capital. Ever since October last, these alarming rumours were being spread on one hand by the organizers of departures to the hills and on the other hand, by the organizers of departures for the Middle East, with the result that most of the Jews preferred to remain on the spot.

(e) owing to the unavoidable circumstances due in most cases to the different intermediaries, it is most likely that financial help will eventually reach its ultimate destination in a much more reduced amount.

XIV. Means of overcoming the foregoing difficulties.

The difficulties mentioned above will have to be overcome with all the moral and material resources at our disposal.

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(a) Above all, we must enlist the support of the Orthodox Church whose high prestige together with her various activities was so helpful last October. All existing organizations working in the underground or openly, who have greatly contributed in sparing the Jews from Nazi extermination, should be required to cooperate.

(b) The Church, professional organizations and underground groups obviously know a great number of Jews now in hiding as well as Christians sheltering Jews or being indirectly connected with them. The few Jews who have contracted mixed marriages and therefore are not subject to anti-Jewish measures must be able to trace their relatives and friends. The 400 refugees who have arrived in the Middle East could also give us some information. The Catholic Church has also helped shelter Jews.

(c) for security purposes it would be unwise to disclose their hiding places. The only indication to be given should be the addresses of people likely to know them. All this work would have to be divided and decentralized. Lists of names must not be issued as they would be detrimental not only to the Jews themselves but also to their Christian friends who are trying to help them. No doubt the experience of the underground organizations would be of great value in this matter.

(d) In order to ensure the equal distribution of funds a process of receipts should be established whereby no name of the disburser should appear on the receipt, but only the sum, date and signature of the recipient. This would prevent abuses, the intermediaries realizing that the distribution is subject to control. This process, of course, would not completely exclude abuses, but would limit them.

(e) In Athens at least, funds should be distributed in gold sovereigns because of the continual depreciation of the local currency.

(f) The Greek Police of Athens may be of great help (identity cards, watching developments of German measures and warning the people in time.) But one must be careful of the few blackmailers or Gestapo agents working inside the Police. Other officials linked with the present Rally Government are likely to do their best in favor of the Jews.

XV. Difficulties and risks of individual (non-organized) attempts to escape by sea.

Generally speaking no one in Athens knows how escapes by caiques are effected. The reason is that those who attempt to escape and do succeed most often have no means of informing their friends of the procedure and on the other hand individuals belonging to organizations who have contacts with the Middle East have very good reasons for giving no information whatsoever. Thus, these escapes are shrouded in an atmosphere of great mystery, apprehension, overwhelming difficulties and enormous risks. With a sound knowledge of the route to follow, the help of local inhabitants in one or two places, courage and initiative, the chances of success are great. This has been proved by the fact that whole families (infants, invalids, old people) have managed a successful escape in the middle of the winter.

The greatest difficulty is to find the road leading to the places of embarkation along the coast. This is not easy for people in hiding.

By trusting unknown intermediaries or even the captain of a caique, the risk of falling into a trap set by the Gestapo is always present.

A further

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A further risk is that the intermediary who is pretending to arrange for an escape is actually only trying to exploit the person, but in this case the harm is not so great if the escapee is eventually conducted to the embarkation point: they then have a chance of being sooner or later, put on board a caique. This is what has happened to most Jews who have managed to escape from Greece. However, their stay in the coastal area can be a very difficult one if their sailing is delayed and they have not sufficient funds to buy food with, etc...

Another risk is that the caique may be in poor shape, too small a motor, badly equipped or a shipper with no previous experience in crossings. In such a case, of course, the crossing may be fatal.

All these escapes have to be arranged through a number of intermediaries and each one is interested in making a profit; thus, the amount of money requested is very often much higher than the price one can afford. In October 1943, while a Christian could arrange his escape for one or two gold sovereigns, a Jew would be asked at least ten to twenty and sometimes fifty or more per person. Owing to the present conditions in Greece such sums are available to a small number of Jews only. What frequently happens is that those possessing the money do not have the required courage and vice versa.

The greatest risk of the whole adventure is the crossing of the Evoikos straits which is constantly patrolled by German guards on the look out for boats. Hence the reason for crossing the straits at night which takes approximately 4 hours owing to the swift sea.

The crossing of the Aegean Sea by caiques leaving via the East Coast of the Attica renders the trip much simpler but longer. The greatest difficulty lies in the essentiality of coordinating the simultaneous arrival of boats and escaping parties, as there are no camping facilities on the coast of East Attica.

The above mentioned notes are aimed at showing as clearly as possible the need for a systematic organization to enable Jews in overcoming difficulties and avoiding unnecessary risks.

XVI. Suggestions about measures to be taken in order to facilitate escapes by sea.

Personal experience lead us to make the following suggestions:

(a) No synchronization must be sought between departures from Athens and sailing from the coast of Euboea, which at the present moment is practically impossible. It would be advisable to direct as many Jews as possible from Athens to Euboea, provided sufficient boats have been secured.

(b) Disperse them among the various villages of the region and send them to the coast only in small groups according to the facilities of evacuation by caiques existing at the time. For security purposes concentrations of refugees on the coast must be avoided.

(c) In order that evacuation of Jews from Athens to the regions of departure may be undertaken with the greatest possible safety, it is necessary to have reliable assistance. There are local people affiliated to secret organizations who exercise supervision, give useful advises, procure means of transportation, etc. Generally, they are considered as trustworthy people who also must have some remuneration adequate to the services rendered. Their collaboration

in connection

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in connection with assistance to Jews should be rewarded.

(d) The coastal region of Euboea from which caiques sail is very poor; the villagers can hardly afford their own livelihood; transit and prolonged sojourn of numerous groups of refugees aggravates the shortage of foodstuffs. These conditions lead to a tremendous increase in prices which is of no importance for the few well-to-do, but greatly endangers the existence of the others. It must be added that the solidarity which should be expected among the refugees is very often lacking; the predominant feeling being "Every one for oneself".

(e) The Partisans who occupied the region in October last tried to enforce a little order in connection with the transit of Jews. But it seems that they have withdrawn recently farther north leaving part of the sector in the hands of armed police of the Greek misling Government. This alteration has increased the difficulties. Among the men of this force, who is armed by the Germans and who is supposedly fighting communism, there must be numerous spies working for the Gestapo. Under such conditions points of embarkation must be moved further north.

According to refugees recently arrived in the Middle East, the following regrettable incident occurred a few weeks ago:

At the moment of sailing, a caique was prevented from doing so by a group of Partisans; all the refugees aboard were searched; all their personal belongings, gold etc. were taken from them and they were told that they (the Jews) should be contented to save themselves without trying to save their possessions as well! Such an incident seems entirely inconsistent with the activity and help shown towards the Jews by the Partisans from the beginning. So, it may be presumed that they were not Partisans but ordinary malefactors. However, it is hoped that this will be the only incident of its kind; but it is a bad example and deserves full attention.

XVII. Arrangements for the improvement of camping conditions of refugees in the coastal zone.

In order to relieve the refugees during their usually delayed stay in the area from which the departures take place and in view of the prospective increase of the number of Jews in transit in Euboea it is essential:

(a) to send supplies for villagers who feed the refugees and for the refugees themselves. For example on their way back the caiques might carry the necessary foodstuffs. In the past, supplies were sometimes sent to the population of these regions. Wheat, corn, potatoes, onions, olives and figs would be appreciated.

(b) to grant material assistance to the refugees in need waiting for the arrival of a boat. It may perhaps be more convenient if part of the help to be granted was given in the local currency so as to avoid strengthening the feeling that all Jews are wealthy and possess gold.

XVIII. The necessity of improving the solidarity and the good sentiments of the native villagers: suggested message to be addressed to them.

The population in this area is poor, rather ignorant, but honest by nature. These villagers having passively or actively helped for the past three years in the traffic with the Middle East feel that they are thus contributing to the war effort. Since last October, not only Greek or allied officers have passed through to join the fighting forces, or bring valuable information; but also groups of men, women and children who are not directly connected with the war;

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these are the Jewish refugees. All they know about them is that Jews are different from the rest of the people. Why are they escaping? Why are they being persecuted by the Germans? They do not understand the reason for this persecution. The Partisans have asked them to help these Jews; their school teachers have sometimes tried to explain to them that these people are equally brothers in arms, and since the common enemy - the Germans - is persecuting them, they must also be helped; they must accommodate and feed them though payment may sometimes be impossible. The Partisans, however, are not always natives of the area they rule and accordingly they are not fully trusted by the villagers. Another thing: "Jews are presumably rich;" thus the opportunity for profiteering.

It is obvious that under such conditions a message from the Free Greek Government would be of the greatest utility. The Greeks have a very highly developed sense of personal pride. This characteristic should be stimulated. They could be reminded that the Christian religion says "love thy neighbor; all men are equal", "those who suffer should be helped"; Jews are equally Greek. One of them, a gallant officer - native of Halkis, the capital of their own island - was killed in action in the Albanian war; thousands of Greek Jews defended their land against the invaders, hundreds among them were killed, and it is upon these people that the Germans have concentrated their hatred using the most horrible means at their disposal. They are determined to exterminate them because Jews are declared enemies of Nazism. Besides, Jews all over the world are friends of Greece and the day is close when they will actively show what they can do to help realize the national Greek claims as well as relieve and restore the country ruined by the invaders. It is therefore, a national and patriotic duty as well as a question of honor to help Greek Jews in every possible way. It could also be mentioned that the help given up to now to Jews by the inhabitants of this region is well known in competent circles and that moral and material reward will be forthcoming as a reward to those deserving it.

An appeal embodying the above mentioned principles should be read in all the villages of the district. It would be preferable not to distribute leaflets which may fall into the hands of the Germans who would adopt measures of reprisals.

XIX. The necessity of increasing the small number of boats for the rescue of refugees.

The efforts to be made for encouraging the evacuation of the Jews from Athens in directing them towards the coast would be useless and even harmful, if simultaneously arrangements were not made to provide an adequate number of boats.

Considering the geographical position of Greece, which is one of the best in occupied Europe, the number of escapes have been very few. The Jewish refugees, who have escaped to the Middle East during the last seven months has not exceeded 400, which comes to an average of about 2 Jews being rescued per day. One must point out that a good many of these Jewish refugees reach the Turkish coast through private arrangements of their own.

The Smyrna Allied Authorities have at their disposal many caiques of different sizes, the smallest being able to hold 20 passengers and the largest 80. Since last October there has been much talk about a Jewish Organization employing 2 caiques; some even talked of 5 boats. Actually, we have not as yet heard of any

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Jews crossing the Aegean Sea in one of these caiques. Besides, if there really existed 5 or even 2 caiques for the exclusive use of the Jewish Organization, we should have been able in seven months time, to save a much greater number of Jews. One must reckon that most probably the Jewish Organization itself does not run any boat but has an agreement with some of the captains of caiques to take refugees on board with the promise of being generously rewarded. Such arrangement which seems to help the rescuing of the Jews is still quite inadequate. The good will of the Captains in itself is not sufficient; a great deal depends as well on competent officials residing in Smyrna; a captain of a caique will not undertake the crossing unless he is ordered to; he is also instructed as to the number of passengers he is allowed to take on board and as to the point of the Greek coast from which he will sail. On the other hand, it must be remembered that it does not rest with the Smyrna authorities to rescue the Jews, their attributions being of a military character. Besides, the increase of the number of refugees is in some way considered as a danger to the main activities of the above mentioned service.

These are at present the chief difficulties in rescuing Jews through the Aegean Sea. Under the above mentioned conditions it is suggested to have the War Refugee Board take this matter up with the competent Military authorities in order to reach a satisfactory agreement to both sides.

Furthermore, the rescue of the Jews must not continue to remain any further an auxiliary duty but a systematic and efficient effort to be met with full attention.

XX. Utility of questioning every refugee upon his arrival in the Middle East.

The work of rescuing Jews in Athens would be greatly facilitated if the office of the War Refugee Board in Smyrna would organize an Information Department for the questioning of each refugee upon arrival.

- (a) On relatives and friends remaining in Greece.
- (b) On the conditions under which they are hiding.
- (c) How they can be traced, what help they need etc.

The information thus confidentially obtained would be extremely useful. Should this information be gathered in Palestine instead of Turkey, a delay of over a month would be caused.

XII. Help to be given to Jewish Refugees from the provincial towns at present living in regions occupied by Partisans.

- (a) First of all it is necessary to obtain the information referred to in Para X (g through l) in order to know the scope of this special problem.
- (b) Financial assistance should be organized according to the number and the living conditions of Jewish Refugees. Distribution of this assistance should be made under the supervision of the local Partisan Organization; this task will be more difficult where the Jewish refugees are not more or less grouped together.
- (c) Organize the supply and distribution of foodstuffs, vitamins and medicines where they are most needed, with the collaboration of the local Partisan Organization.
- (d) A message similar to the one suggested in para XVIII should also be addressed to the populations in different sectors of the

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country where the Jewish refugees have taken shelter. The local Partisan Organizations could undertake the adequate publicity.

XVII. Necessity of a warning to be given by the Free Greek Government relative to the blackmailing and denunciation of Jews.

It would be very desirable if the Free Greek Government should issue an official warning to the effect that any attempt to denounce or to blackmail any citizen persecuted by the German Authorities will be punished upon liberation of the country with greatest severity. All acts of this nature will be considered equivalent to acts of treason.

XVIII. The duty of every Jew without dependents and eligible for military service should be to join the Partisans.

No matter how difficult present conditions are, the duty of every Jew is to contribute in every possible way towards the liberation of the country. Thus, those who are of age, who have been through the Albanian war, or who have received military training, and are without dependents should join the Partisans; that is what most of their fellow Jews, who avoided being caught in the other occupied countries have done. Should this policy be adopted the number of women, children and aged, to be evacuated would be greater. They should also be informed that upon arrival in the Middle East they are to be enlisted for military service with the Greek Armed Forces.

by Alfred H. Cohen

15th May, 1944.

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February 22, 1944.

MEMORANDUM

Deportation of Greek Jews -- Censorship Intercept
(NYC 299716-B). (Material obtained from file in
Visa Division, State Department)

The following is a telegram which was sent by Leon Kubowitzki to N. Borou, A. L. Easterman, 55 New Cavendish Street, London, on November 30, 1943: Received catastrophic news Greek Jewry. 55,000 Jews Salonica deported Poland. Many died en route. Few Turkish subjects arrived Turkey recently. About 300 Spanish subjects directed Spain through Germany. Whereabouts unknown. Some Italian subjects. Salonica, Macedonia, Thrace now without Jews. Properties, resources confiscated. After Armistice Italy Athens Community including 3,000 Salonica refugees severely persecuted by Gestapo. Some 100 young Jews cooperating with partisans. General attitude Greek population correct. Few refugees arriving Palestine Egypt join Greek Army. Please take steps obtain support British representatives Turkey for Isaac Molho from Jerusalem who proceeds Istanbul.

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