AMERICAN EMBASSY,
LISBON,
1947:
The War Refugee Board requests that you deliver the following message to Mr. I. Weissman, 179 Avenida Liberdade, Lisbon, Portugal:

QUOTE: Have you recent information concerning number ofTurkish origin in France who have returned to Turkey, numbers and present condition those who are still in France? Have you also information concerning number of Jews of Portuguese and Spanish origin who were repatriated from Haifa? World Jewish Congress, Leon Kubowitski
UNQUOTE.

MULL
(CL77)

WR:ACKED: KG
7/10/44

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date
SEP 20 1972
CABLE TO AMBASSADOR [REDACTED], LISBON, PORTUGAL

The war Refugee Board requests that you deliver the following message to Mr. I. Heissman, 179 Avenida Liberdade, Lisbon, Portugal:

CABLE. Have you recent information concerning number of Jews of Turkish origin in France who have returned to Turkey, numbers and present condition those who are still in France? Have you also information concerning number of Jews of Portuguese and Spanish origin who were repatriated from raidart?

[Signature]

EHUD JERISH COMMIS
LEON KKLINSZKI UNI lLO.

THIS IS 9TH CABLE TO LISBON NO. 53

**************
July 7, 1944
10:30 a.m.

[Signature]

BA. L.T.
Sequeirar 7/9/44
In reply refer to: No. 138

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

July 5, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

May I ask you to kindly forward to Mr. Weissman, through the facilities of the State Department, the following message:

"To: Mr. I. Weissman, 179 Avenida Liberdade, Lisbon. From: Dr. Kubowitzki, World Jewish Congress, New York.

Have you recent information concerning number Jews of Turkish origin in France who have returned to Turkey, numbers and present condition those who are still in France? Have you also information concerning number of Jews of Portuguese and Spanish origin who were repatriated from Maldari?"

Thanking you in advance, I remain

Sincerely yours,

A. Leon Kubowitzki, Head
Rescue Department
Mr. Secretary:

May 24, 1964

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I appreciate your letter. I have just had a call from the Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., to report on the situation in Greece.

As you know, the Greek government has asked the United States to provide military aid to support their forces in operations against the Communists. I understand that the Greek government has also requested economic assistance to help offset the costs of the war.

I am enclosing a copy of the letter from the Secretary of State, which contains a detailed account of the current situation in Greece.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. Letter, 1972

By: H. R. Pekh Date: SEP 20 1972
This is 43 cable No. 36.

Your 43 to War Refugee Board of April 30 received. Accordingly, letter dispatched to Turkish Ambassador requesting that the Turkish government advise German and other authorities in France that upon the assertion of a claim to Turkish nationality, the claimant is to be extended all the rights, privileges and immunities of a Turkish national unless and until, after investigation, the Turkish government advises such authorities that it has rejected such claim. It is further requested that the Turkish government postpone making adverse determinations of such claims until after the termination of the war. The Ambassador has been informed that this Government has taken a similar position with respect to refugees within German-controlled areas claiming American citizenship.

We further stated that, should the Turkish government find it possible, pending investigation, to bring about the evacuation from German-controlled areas of claimants to Turkish nationality who may be in danger, the Board will undertake to make funds available from American sources for their maintenance and support and will further undertake promptly to find havens outside Turkey for such evacuees whose claims to Turkish nationality are rejected by the Turkish government.

Please continue.
Please continue your efforts along same lines.

We also understand that many Spanish nationals in Greece are interned for deportation. We are urging Spain to take action similar to that asked of Turkey, but we suggest that you might support our action by urging Spanish Minister at Ankara who, we are informed, is handling the matter. We are also asking Vatican to intercede with Spain.

Null.
Your 43 to War Refugee Board of April 22 received. Accordingly, letter despatched to Turkish Ambassador requesting that the Turkish government advise German and other authorities in France that upon the assertion of a claim to Turkish nationality, the claimant is to be extended all the rights, privileges and immunities of a Turkish national unless and until, after investigation, the Turkish government advises such authorities that it has rejected such claim. It is further requested that the Turkish government postpone making adverse determinations of such claims until after the termination of the war. The Ambassador has been informed that this Government has taken a similar position with respect to refugees within German-controlled areas claiming American citizenship.

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Please continue your efforts along same lines.

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May 10, 1944
10:15 a.m.

Ba. 96
Baksinjo 5/6/44
May 6, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Executive Office of the President
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Pehle,

I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 3, 1944, concerning the plight of the Jews claiming Turkish nationality in France, and to inform you that upon representations from the World Jewish Congress and the Venezuelan Embassy I had brought this matter to the attention of my Government. I have recently been informed by them that of the Jews in question those whose nationality status is in order have been and are being freely admitted to Turkey, and that those who had lost their citizenship could not legally return to Turkey.

I have lately been approached again with a request for securing, at least temporarily, the accordance of the privileges of Turkish nationality by the German authorities to Jews whose status has not been finally established, and I am transmitting the matter by courier to my Government. I shall not fail to inform you of their reply when it arrives.

As you are aware, the Turkish Government is doing everything within the limits of possibility in order to relieve the suffering of these people.

I remain, my dear Mr. Pehle,

Sincerely yours,

Turkish Ambassador
My dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am writing to draw your urgent attention to the desperate plight of a large number of Jews claiming Turkish nationality who are in France and other areas under German control. It is understood that the Turkish Government has recognized some of these claims but that in most cases no action has as yet been taken with the result that some of the persons involved have already been transported to Poland and almost certain death. Information now available to the Board indicates that an additional group of approximately 800 Jews claiming Turkish nationality are in imminent danger of deportation from France to Poland.

It is understood that Turkish consuls in France have forwarded a list of these persons to Ankara for confirmation of their status, but that as yet no determination has been made by the Turkish Government. While the Board recognizes that the determination of these claims is a matter solely within the province of the Government of Turkey, the Board feels constrained to address you on this subject because it is the established policy of this Government to take all measures within its power, consistent with the successful prosecution of the war, to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death.

We appreciate that the investigation of these claims to Turkish nationality must necessarily take considerable time. It is feared, however, that pending such investigations, the claimants, or a number of them, are likely to be deported. For this reason, we suggest that the Turkish Government might find it appropriate to advise German and other authorities in France that upon the assertion of a claim to Turkish nationality, the claimant is to be extended all the rights, privileges and immunities of a Turkish national unless and until, after investigation, the Turkish Government advises such authorities that it has rejected such claim. The Government of the United States has taken such positions with respect to refugees within German-controlled areas claiming American citizenship.
It is sincerely hoped that the Turkish Government will find it appropriate to take the position above suggested and otherwise to extend its protection to victims of German oppression in France and elsewhere. Thus, the Board has been informed that many of these claimants to Turkish nationality are Turkish born and that the validity of their claims may often depend upon an interpretation of their acts since leaving Turkey in the light of the Turkish Nationality Law. In view of the dire consequences of adverse determinations of such claims at this time, the Turkish Government might find it appropriate in such cases to postpone making adverse determinations in such cases until after the termination of the war. Furthermore, should the Turkish Government find it possible, pending investigation, to bring about the evacuation from German-controlled areas of claimants to Turkish nationality who may be in danger, the Board will undertake to make funds available from American sources for their maintenance and support and will further undertake promptly to find havens outside Turkey for such evacuees whose claims to Turkish nationality are rejected by the Turkish Government.

In view of the desperate situation in which these claimants to Turkish nationality find themselves, and the deep concern which this Government has for such victims of German oppression, I feel free to express the hope that the Turkish Government will find it possible to extend its protection in the manner suggested, or in some comparable manner, to the persons concerned.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Hon. Mehmet Munir Ertegun
The Ambassador of Turkey
Washington, D. C.

[Signature]
April 27, 1944

Hon. John W. Pehle, Executive Director
War Refugees Board
Executive Office of the President
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I am attaching a copy of a letter which was addressed on April 12th by the Turkish Ambassador to Mr. James Wise.

I infer from this letter that the attitude of the Turkish Government, with regard to the 10,000 Jews of Turkish origin now in France, has in fact not changed and that the danger which threatens them is more acute than ever.

The Turkish Ambassador writes that those who have been deprived of the Turkish nationality "in accordance with Article X of the Turkish Nationality Law, for not having complied with the duties of all Turkish citizens, have not been granted certificates of nationality. Furthermore, according to Article XII of the same law, such ex-citizens are not allowed to return to Turkey."

According to our Lisbon representative, Mr. Weissman, the real situation is the following:

"It was about 1935 that a law was promulgated in Ankara, cancelling the nationality of thousands of Jews living abroad. They were to make special applications in case they should like to be recognized as Turkish citizens. All of them have made out the necessary applications, but many of them have been refused, and others have never received an answer. All of these people are actually Turkish-born. Many of them come from Istanbul and Smyrna, and among them are many Turkish war veterans."

I think our viewpoint has been best expressed in a letter addressed on January 27th by Dr. Wise to Mr. Travaja, a copy of which is attached.
I would be grateful to you if you would call once more Ambassador Steinhardt's attention to this question so that he may ask the Turkish Foreign Minister to instruct the Turkish Diplomatic Representatives in France to protect all those Jews claiming Turkish citizenship regardless of whether they fall or not under the competence of the Turkish law of 1935.

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Mr. A. Leo Kubowitzki, Head
Rescue Department

ALK:ef
Enc.
Dr. J. W. Wise
World Jewish Congress
330 West 42nd St.
New York City 18

My dear Dr. Wise:

I wish to refer to our conversation at the Embassy last February. I have now received a reply to the inquiry I had addressed to my government with regard to the status of the Jews, formerly of Turkish nationality, in France, in which it is stated that all Jews of Turkish nationality residing in France and in German-occupied territories and who have complied effectively with all the regulations concerning citizenship, have, on application to Turkish Consular Offices, been granted visas and have returned to or are returning to Turkey, either individually or in groups. Only those who have repudiated Turkish nationality or been deprived thereof, in accordance with Article X of the Turkish Nationality Law, for not having complied with the duties of all Turkish citizens, have not been granted certificates of nationality. Furthermore, according to Article XII of the same law, such ex-citizens are not allowed to return to Turkey.

The reply goes on to outline the various facilities for transit which have been granted, purely on humanitarian grounds, to non-Turkish Jews emigrating from Europe, in spite of the overburdened transport facilities in Turkey, and to state that large numbers have been and are being evacuated from the occupied countries in Europe into Palestine.

I wish to bring this information to your attention, and remain

Sincerely yours,

(signed) M. M. Ertegun
Turkish Ambassador
January 27, 1944

Ref: VD 840.48 Refugees/1940

Mr. Howard K. Travers, Chief
Visa Division
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. Travers:

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated January 14, 1944, containing information cabled to the Department of State by Ambassador Steinhardt. Pursuant to this matter, and being fully cognizant of the assurance accorded to Ambassador Steinhardt that all possible measures would be undertaken to protect the thousands of Jews in jeopardy in France wherever they can establish citizenship, may I draw your attention to a statute promulgated in Ankara in 1935 as a result of which a large segment of Turkish Jews residing abroad lost their status as Turkish citizens.

That the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs is doubtful as to whether they Vichy authorities will honor his intervention on behalf of those who cannot establish their Turkish citizenship can be inferred from your letter. Bearing in mind the World Jewish Congress wishes to stress the fact that the French authorities (Prefectures de Police) refused to recognize this de-nationalization by the Turkish authorities. All the identity, residence, and other legal documents delivered by the French authorities subsequent to the enactment of the aforementioned law bears the stamp that the possessors are of Turkish nationality. As a result of this unique situation the German occupying authorities categorized these Jews as Turkish citizens and treated them as neutrals. Being Jews they perforce suffered but were spared the far of concentration camps and deportation. Unfortunately this anomalous situation has come to the attention of the Nazis, who upon learning that many of these Jews are not considered as Turkish citizens, have seized this opportunity to persecute them. I therefore feel it imperative to point out that in this life or death matter the power to render aid is vested not with the Vichy authorities but with the Turkish Diplomatic Representatives in France who have the prerogative to recognize them as Turkish citizens.

I would be most grateful if you would convey this vital information to Ambassador Steinhardt so that he may ask the Turkish Foreign Minister to instruct the Turkish representatives in France to protect all those Jews claiming Turkish citizenship, regardless of
whether they fall under the competence of the Turkish law of 1935, or whether, for various reasons, they did not need the Turkish request to return immediately so that their rights as Turkish citizens could be safeguarded.

It is my opinion that the technical problem of whether these endangered Jews are Turkish citizens or not is immaterial and should be postponed until after the war. I trust you will concur with me that for the present it is essential that the lives of these people be saved and the Turkish authorities be induced to extend every possible regulation so that the stricken people can survive the ordeal confronting them.

May I extend my cordial and sincere thanks for your kind attention in this urgent matter.

Faithfully yours,

(signed) Stephen S. Wise

PRESIDENT

SSW:31s

of
Secretary of State,
Washington

1304, Twentieth, 6 p.m.

WRB 10 FROM SCHWARTZ FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD AND LEAVITT

Joint Distribution Committee New York, "Blickonstaff has now received list 770 names approved by French authorities for North African camp including 365 sopherdim most recently arrived. No information yet regarding transportation facilities this group or even approximate date departure. Concerning Jews of Turkish origin now France threatened with deportation Ambassador Steinhart again discussed matter with Minister Foreign Affairs, Ankara who advises most specific instructions have been sent to Turkish Ambassador, Vichy and every reason to believe those instructions being faithfully carried out. Concerning Canadian immigration project difficult understand why authorization transit visas so slow especially view fact all persons receiving Canadian visas go through British security. Thus far 115 persons have come to Spain from France and being maintained by us".

NORWEB
Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Dr. Joseph Schwarts was received from Lisbon under date of April 29, 1944:

"[Undecipherable text]"

Very truly yours,

J. W. Peble
Executive Director

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

Mem: 5/2/44 [Signature]
Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Dr. Joseph Schwartz was received from Lisbon under date of April 25, 1944:

"36 Turkish repatriates from Greece arrived Istanbul receiving our full assistance. Small group Portuguese nationals non-Greeces may be deported unless Portuguese Government intervenes, authorities here being approached undertake necessary steps. Similar situation confronts another larger group Spanish nationals interned Greece for deportation. Representations have already been made by Spanish Minister, Janka, and we taking up matter Madrid but help your end important. Approximately six thousand Turkish nationals France whose status repatriation uncertain now in precarious situation. Ambassador Steinhardt informed and assume will do everything possible but important pressure from Washington be applied this situation if deportation this large group to be avoided. For your information, International Red Cross ship HELLASITINZ arrived yesterday Istanbul from Romania carrying one hundred thirty children twenty escorts."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Fehle

J. W. Fehle
Executive Director

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

Philab 4/27/44
Lisbon
Dated April 25, 1944

Secretary of State
Washington.

1242, twentyfifth, 5 p.m.

WRB number 6. FOLLOWING MESSAGE IS FROM JOSEPH SCHWARTZ FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD AND LEAVITT, JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE NEW YORK.

"36 Turkish repatriates from Greece arrived Istanbul receiving our full assistance. Small group Portuguese nationals—a now Greece may be deported unless Portuguese Governor intervenes. Authorities here being approached undertake necessary steps. Similar situation confronts another larger group Spanish nationals interned Greece for deportation. Representations have already been made by Spanish Minister, Ankara, and we taking up matter Madrid but help your end important. Approximately six thousand Turkish nationals France whose status repatriation uncertain now in precarious situation. Ambassador Steinhart informed and assume will do everything possible but important pressure from Washington be applied this situation if deportation this large group to be avoided. For your information. International Red Cross
-2-1242 twentyfifth, 5 p.m., Lisbon
Red Cross ship BELL: CITY arrived yesterday Istanbul
from Rumania carrying one hundred thirty children
twenty escorts".

NORWEB

LMS
Ankara

Dated April 22, 1944
Rec’d 7:55 p.m., 23rd.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

722, April 22, 3 p.m.

FOR THE WAR REFUGEES BOARD FROM THE AMBASSADOR,
Ankara number 43.

I perceive no objection to the Board raising with
the Turkish Ambassador in Washington the danger of
deposition to approximately 800 Jews in France who
claim Turkish nationality.

Department’s number 350, April 19.

As the Board is aware the Minister for Foreign
Affairs at my request has on two occasions telegraphed
the Turkish Ambassador in Vichy to lend every possible
assistance to these individuals. It is quite possible
that, on receiving word from his Ambassador in Washington
that he has been approached, the Minister may again
communicate with the Turkish Ambassador in Vichy.

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

AMBASSADOR

ATLANTA

350

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WRB No 24.

Representative of Joint Distribution Committee in Spain has advised Board danger of deportation approximately 800 Jews in France who claim Turkish nationality. Lists of these people have been forwarded to Ankara by Turkish Consul who await decision concerning their status. Your opinion is requested as to whether Board should raise question with Turkish Ambassador here in view of negotiations reported in Embassy cable 299 of February 19.

HULL

(EMH)

AMBULANCE

4/19/44
CABLE TO ANKARA
From War Refugee Board to Steinhardt

Board has been advised from Spain that approximately 800 Jews in France claiming Turkish nationality are in danger of deportation. Turkish Consuls have forwarded lists to Ankara, but have received no decision concerning status of these people. War Refugee Board has been asked to intervene with Turkish authorities. In view of negotiations reported in your number 299 of February 19, please advise if in your opinion Board should raise question with Turkish Ambassador here.

THIS IS WRR ANKARA CABLE NO. 24.

April 15, 1944
2:15 p.m.

Ph: Lab 14/44

cc: Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Pehle, Stewart, Central Files Cable Control Files
LEAVITT
JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
250 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY

702 SAMUEL SEQUEIRA BARCELONA ADVISES THERE ARE ABOUT EIGHTHUNDRED JEWS
IN FRANCE MOST OF THEM IN PARIS AND LYONS WHO WERE BORN IN TURKEY AND CLAIM TURKISH
NATIONALITY BASIS OF WHICH THEY COULD BE REPATRIATED STOP TURKISH CONSULS HAVE FOR-
WARDED THESE LISTS ANKARA BUT HAVE RECEIVED NO DECISION CONCERNING THEIR STATUS
WHICH REMAINS THEIR CONDITION CRITICAL AND THEM SUBJECT TO DEPORTATION STOP URGENT
YOU MAKE NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS THROUGH BAR REFUGEES BOARD TO TURKISH AUTHORITIES
THAT THIS GROUP BE REPATRIATED EVEN PENDING FINAL DECISION DETERMINING THEIR
NATIONALITY STOP ONLY IN THIS WAY CAN THIS GROUP BE SAVED STOP TURKISH CONSULATES
FUTURE SHOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO PROTECT THESE PEOPLE IN ARRANGE THEIR REPATRIATION
ADVICE.

JOSEPH SCHWARTZ
MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

April 14, 1944

Re: Jews of Turkish nationality residing in France.

On December 21, 1943, the Germans publicly announced in Paris that after January 31, 1944, Turkish Jews would be treated the same as German Jews. The Turkish Consulate in Paris thereupon warned all Jewish Turkish nationals who were "in order with the Consulate General" and who wished to return to Turkey to prepare for departure immediately. According to Hirschman, the Turkish Consulate protested to Vichy, but without effect.

The Board's files indicate that on February 1, 1944, Jacob Landow of the American Jewish Committee informed Miss Hodel that he had been informed by Breckenridge Long that the Turkish Government on January 31 had agreed to extend passports of refugees in France who are naturalized Turkish citizens. Information of the same effect was given to Moses Leavitt and to Rabbi Wise in letters from the State Department declaring that State Department had been informed that the Turkish Government would "do everything it consistently can to protect the Jewish people of Turkish originality who find themselves in France". On February 19, (Wire No. 299) Hirschman reported to the Board that Steinhardt had persuaded the British Ambassador in Ankara on February 18 to send a note to the Turkish Foreign Office concerning the plight of Jews of Turkish originality in France. This note stated that the British Government supports the request made by Steinhardt on two previous occasions requesting Turkey to make necessary representations to Vichy that Jews of Turkish originality be not expelled from France. It is commonly believed that 10,000 such Jews had been divested of Turkish nationality by operation of the Turkish law.

On March 2, Hirschman reported that he had been informed that 700 visas had been issued by Turkey to these people up to that time, but "several thousand" had already been deported to Poland notwithstanding protests of the Turkish Ambassador in Vichy. He reported that the Turkish Ambassador in Vichy was continuing his efforts but he advised that the Board exert all possible pressure on Vichy directly.
MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

April 14, 1944

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Ankara, March 13, 1944

No. 596

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

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

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

Respectfully yours,

Laurence A. Steinhardt

Enclosure:
Report as described.

AA/1
EIP/ap
To Department in original and hectograph.

cc: Chauncey, Abrahamson, Akain, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pollak, Raines, Smith, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Pohle, Sargoy, Mannon, Weinstein, Files
Ankara, Turkey
March 6, 1944.

Mr. John G. Pehle, Acting Director,
War Refugee Board,
Washington.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I submit herewith my first report on the situation existing in Turkey and the Balkan satellite countries pursuant to the assignment given me by the War Refugee Board and our preliminary discussions in Washington on January 24th and in your telegram to Ambassador Steinhardt (No. 120 of February 12th, 8 p.m.).

En route to Ankara I spent five days in Cairo. Acting on the advice of Ambassador Steinhardt, I went for two days to Jerusalem to explore the situation there as related to the Board's program. The time both in Jerusalem and Cairo were devoted to investigation connected with the activities of MERRA (Middle East Research and Rehabilitation Administration), since absorbed, I am told, by UNRRA. This report concerns itself with the situation in Turkey as observed by me since the time of my arrival here until the date of this report.

Dispatch No 172 of February 20th from Ambassador Steinhardt to the Secretary of State covers the period up to the date of my arrival. The position as I found it at the time of my arrival here and the steps taken by me thereafter are as follows:

1. Rail Traffic. The relatively limited number of refugees who had been coming through Turkey by rail since 1941 from the Balkan satellite countries virtually ceased on or about January 1, 1944. Prior to that date, during October, November, and December 1943, 200 refugees came through Turkey from Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary and are now in Palestine. The Hungarians could not go through Rumania and the Rumanians could not go through Bulgaria. Nor would the Bulgarians or any refugees who had found their way into Bulgaria with Turkey as their intended destination leave Bulgaria. But for this stoppage the number of reason people would have been more or less regular according to the schedule then existing.

This schedule of about sixty a week constituted nine families permitted to enter Turkey en route to Palestine from each of the
three satellite countries mentioned above. (On this question of
the nine families there still exists some confusion of inter-
pretation and efforts are being made to have this clarified with
the Turkish consuls in each of the countries. In some instances it
has been interpreted by the Turkish consuls abroad as nine people
rather than nine families, which is the interpretation of the
Turkish authorities in Ankara.)

The lists of visas approved by the Turkish authorities in
Ankara which were to be forwarded to the Turkish consuls in the
three countries were at times delayed for six to eight weeks on
the desk of Nasal Asi Payman, Turkish Director-General of the
Department of Consular Affairs. In accordance with the complex
and protracted routine of the Turkish authorities as outlined
below three to four months were required for the release. In
addition, the routine was frequently choked at one or several
points. The Turkish authorities maintained that some of these
lists were held up on Mr. Baby's (Vice Consul of the British
Embassy) desk. I have reason to believe that this claim is not
without foundation.

In this connection I think it desirable to acquaint you
with the routine and the steps necessary to be taken in connec-
tion with the approval of visas and the time required under this
routine to obtain visas and releases for refugees from the
Balkan states. The steps are as follows:

1) Mr. Barlas of the Jewish Agency makes
up his list on the basis of information given
him by representatives and others who have come
from the occupied countries. It is necessary
for him to have the full data--name, date, where and
when born, present address, etc.

2) These lists are then sent to authori-
ties of the Jewish Agency in Palestine for them
to obtain guarantees of admission to Palestine
by the British government representatives there.

3) The British authorities in Palestine
after checking sends it edited and approved
list to the authorities in London for authoriza-
tion.

4) London officials send the authorized
list to the British passport officer at
Istanbul, Major Whittall who is very coopera-

(This requires
from 2 to 3
weeks.)

(This requires
from 2 to 3
weeks.)

(This requires
from 2 to 3
weeks.)
Since writing, we have succeeded in condensing three
four steps into two requiring
one or two instead of eight or
nine weeks.

(5) After the British passport officer at
Istanbul obtains this data, he makes up a note
each week which goes from Istanbul to Mr. Huy
in the British Embassy at Ankara which contains
the names of the nine families.

(6) Why than sends a note to the Turkish
Ministry of Foreign Affairs containing the
names of the nine families from the three
satellite countries.

(7) This last then reaches the hands of
Asia oriental Paymaster of the Foreign Office, who
routes it through the various departments of
the Turkish government, viz., the Minister,
police, military authorities and other officials.

(8) When all the steps of approval as
explained above have been obtained, the names
are dispatched to its Turkish consuls at
Bucharest, Budapest and Sofia (now Plovdiv
due to bombing of Sofia.)

In this manner 1200 names had been approved in the period
since September 1943. In addition, an agreement had been ob-
tained from the Palestine government to permit 5,000 Jewish
refugee children to come into Palestine provided means of trans-
portation could be arranged, in groups of 75 to 100 per week.
The approval of the Turkish government had been obtained for
this movement. The agreement was finally concluded in January
1944. Both the Turkish and British officials in Ankara agreed
that names had been accumulating during December 1943 and
January 1944. The Turks maintained that none of the refugees
had remained in Istanbul violating the agreement that they leave
within 24 hours and that this was a reason for holding back
additional names. A check-up disclosed that there was some
truth to this contention. As the result of discussion with
representatives of the Jewish agency, they agreed to put an end
to this practice.

While it is correct that the Turks had agreed prior to my
arrival to permit more refugees to pass through Turkey than had
been able to leave the Balkan countries, it is also a fact that
some who had been listed for departure had been delayed and
were being held back due to the above outlined red tape in
I Turkioh and British procedure, while the American Embassy had succeeded in expediting individual cases, they were still struggling at the time of my arrival to have the routine simplified.

After consultation with British officials, including the British Minister to Turkey, Mr. J. G. Sterndale Bennett, Mr. A. Knox Helm, British Counselor of Embassy, Mr. Henry (on whose shoulders the routine of this work had fallen) and the aforementioned Kemal Avis Paymann, it was ascertained that the Turkish official maintained that the entrance visas were being delayed while awaiting a general letter from the British guaranteeing that all Jewish refugees entering Turkey on route to Palestine would be permitted to leave for Palestine within 24 hours. This letter was finally located and the refugee movement was resumed as per telegram No. 364, February 26th, 5 p.m.

In a consultation on March 3rd with Kemal Avis Paymann at the Turkish Foreign Office, I was shown the written authorization being sent to the Turkish consuls in the Balkan satellite countries guaranteeing the regular flow of refugees on the basis of nine families a week and 140 children with 10 adults every 10 days to be drawn from the three Balkan satellite countries. We do not see at this time any reason for the interruption of this movement by rail unless something unforeseen develops.

2. Maritime traffic. The political and military situation in the Balkans is more chaotic and subject to deterioration from day to day than is generally understood. The plight of the minorities grows increasingly worse. The Jewish population has been subject to persecution, and annihilation to an extent that beggars description and upon which you have had reports from time to time, which in my opinion are understated rather than overstated. Below I shall offer some further background material more nearly up-to-date on the situation relating to refugees and potential refugee movements from Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Some brief reference will also be made to refugees in Yugoslavia, Greece and Jews of Turkish origin in France.

In view of this desperate situation in the Balkans and the relatively limited number of refugees who can be saved through the quota system and the bureaucratic delays inherent in the ancient Turkish system, it had become apparent to the Ambassador and all those dealing with the problem before my arrival that large scale rescue movements by sea would be indispensable if a substantial number of the persecuted minorities were to be rescued. Efforts had been focused on evacuating some
of 200 children to land. The parents of the children in the
decision to apply to the Jewish Agency for the opportunity to give
their children a new life. Negotiations had been
opened between Mr. Simond of the Jewish Agency, with the approval
of the Ambassador personally, and H. Kellner, Bism.
Turkish representative of the SS VAMIN (1300 tons) at Coronado,
offering No. 282 of February 19. The plan was to take the boat
with a Turkish crew to Istanbul to Constanta to return
to Istanbul with about 200 Jewish refugees, chiefly children. From
Constanta they were expected to be willing to return.

The negotiations were entered into between the Turkish
authorities who control all shipping. At first refusal
to permit the departure to enter into the proposed charter
agreement due to the extremely limited number of ships available
for their purpose at this time and their fear of losing
the ship by which or suburbs near if safe conduct could be
secured by the International Red Cross which had agreed to
provide such safe conduct from all of the belligerent powers.
As a result of our prompt agreement to replace the ship in
the event of loss, Ambassador Steinhardt made forcible personal
and written representations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Minister of Communications. The discussions concerning the
charter were resumed and in this writing the possibility of
acquiring the authorization from the Turkish authorities to now
proceeding. The approval of the Turkish Cabinet will however be
necessary. In this situation I desire to add that I have had
the chance to meet Ambassador Steinhardt personally and the members of his staff in all
of my efforts to rescue refugees and particularly in the pursuit of this ship.

In order to expedite the planned passage of the ship with
the refugees, we have proposed that it should go from Constanta
direct to Haifa. As stated previously, it must be understood
that no such voyage can be contemplated without safe conduct obtained
through the International Red Cross, or the ship must proceed
through the waters of the Black Sea and Jaffa Sea adjacent to Jaffa
controlled by the Russian and German and without such safe conduct
would be subject to constant attack. Approval of the German,
Russian, and British governments is necessary. In the matter
of the German approval, previous experience has indicated that
such requests have been delayed for as long as six months. We
have no way of knowing to what extent the Germans may delay
approval in this instance. Meanwhile we have approached
Mr. Simond, the representative here of the International Red
Cross, who is telegraphing Germany for this approval, and who
has promised to expedite authorization from the Germans with
whom he has an active liaison.
Simultaneously with our efforts to secure the Turkish ship we detemined to press for a Swedish boat. On February 21 a meeting was arranged for me by the Ambassador with Mr. Modig, the Swedish Minister in Ankara who agreed to telegraph his government in Stockholm recommending the use of a Swedish ship for the above mentioned purpose. He cabled on that day asking for permission to have the SS BARDALAND, which was then on route to Salonica to tow the Swedish ship CAMILLA damaged by accidental bombing diverted to Constanza for our purpose. There being a considerable movement of Swedish ships plying from Canada to Greece, we recommended that this or another Swedish ship be diverted by permission of Stockholm for this purpose. In my telegram to you of February 21st (No. 306) I requested you to synchronize these efforts through the Swedish Minister in Washington. I should like also to record the cooperative attitude manifested by the Swedish Minister and his sincere efforts in behalf of our work.

Mr. Modig has today informed me of the telegram he received from Stockholm, about which I telegraphed you on March 8 (No. 397).

Meanwhile an alternative proposal was made by the Jewish Agency to a shipowner in Istanbul for the lease and eventual purchase of the SS NECAT. In his telegram No. 382 of March 3, Ambassador Steinhardt informed you of the preliminary negotiations concerning the SS NECAT. If the purchase of this boat can be arranged at a cost of approximately $400,000, it is our opinion that it will be a sound investment in the furtherance of our work and the larger scope of the War Refugee Board's program since it will cost no more than transporting the same number of refugees by a vessel under charter. It will also open up possibilities of introducing the subject of larger quotas with the Turks by reason of the donation of the vessel by the Red Crescent. Ambassador Steinhardt informs me that as a result of his discussions with the Turkish officials concerned with the matter, he believes that may be amenable to the proposal. I talked (today) with Mr. Almaz Remzi Gonenc, Director General of the Red Crescent, which as the beneficiary of the proposed purchase of the NECAT is obviously eager to see the negotiations materialize as the organization of which he is head is in need of materials and funds, especially in view of recent earthquakes in Turkey, and would receive the proceeds of the sale of the vessel. We are planning to press these negotiations with all possible speed, provided of course the War Refugee Board authorizes the $400,000 payment for the vessel.
By the time you receive this report we will either have concluded some arrangement for a ship or by telegraph informed you of the refusal of the Turkish authorities to charter us a vessel, or of new obstacles beyond our control which may have intervened.

3. Inside the Balkans.

A. Bulgaria. For some time prior to my arrival here it was reported that the Bulgarian officials, controlled or supervised by Nazi officials, had substantially closed the door on refugee exits from Bulgaria. In my talks with the British authorities noted above, they insisted that the door out of Bulgaria was closed from the inside. On February 26th, at the suggestion of Ambassador Steinhardt, I made a trip to Istanbul, remaining five days, and among other things explored the situation presently existing in Bulgaria relating to the departure of Jewish refugees. I spoke with numbers of refugees who had just escaped from Bulgaria including several men who had previously held responsible positions in that country and whose information was checked as being truthful and reliable. It appears that at this date of writing, the Bulgarian officials will permit a larger number of refugee departures from Bulgaria than heretofore. This I reported to you in my cable of February 18th, No. 282. It is not claimed that the Bulgarians will release their minority victims in large numbers, but they seem willing to release two to three hundred a week if transportation is provided and administrative routine relaxed.

It was reported by the refugees who were interviewed by me and who had just arrived that the pressure of the Nazi military had somewhat eased prior to their departure. In this connection I am appending a memorandum from Dr. Albert Roseno, President of the Zionist Organisation of Bulgaria, whom I interviewed in Istanbul on March 12, 1944, after he had escaped from Bulgaria. (Exhibit A). Also attached is a memorandum of a conversation with Dr. Lloyd H. Black, Auxiliary Foreign Service Officer, who deals with Bulgarian questions in the American Consulate General at Istanbul, together with a copy of the Bulgarian anti-Jewish law of August 29, 1942, with comments which were forwarded to the Secretary of State by the then American Consul General, Mr. Samuel H. Bonker, on November 16, 1942. Included for your background information is a letter of March 15, 1943, from a Bulgarian woman describing vividly and at first hand the situation connected with the persecution program on a single day (Exhibit B). In addition, there is enclosed herewith a copy of a despatch dated February 26th, 1944, from the American Consulate General at Istanbul to the Secretary...
I was searching for it and found that there is a

left over which I am not sure how much. I will

come back the next time.

The fifty children are all healthy, and I am

happy to see them.

I have been teaching here for a month, and

the members of the community are very

helpful. They have given me many

opportunities to improve myself.

I am very grateful to them.

I hope to continue my work in this

area and contribute to the

development of the community.
In January 1941, the Iron Cross openly resisted against the red onslaught. For three days the leaders of the Iron Cross (the Urdas) during these three days, about 100 Jews were murdered in the most terrible manner.

The agons reached their height with the re-occupation of Bessarabia and Transnistria in June 1941. The following statistics alone offer a picture of the number of victims.

Before the outbreak of this war, about 300,000 Jews lived in Bessarabia. They were divided as follows: 260,000 in actual Bessarabia, 250,000 in Transnistria, 300,000 in Bucovina, and 150,000 in the Iasi department. About 150,000 must be deducted from the total, as living in the part of Romania taken over by Hungary. From the army captured the Bucovina and Bessarabia, the General Staff permitted them three days for murder, robbery and plundering. The result of this measure can be seen in the following data: In the districts of Cernovita and Storujistita (Bucovina) 12,000 Jews were shot. In other towns of actual Bessarabia and Transnistria pogroms against Jews occurred, resulting in deaths.

(c) Deportations. In October 1941, deportation of Jews to Transnistria, the area between the Dniestr and the Bug, began. Eighteen thousand (18,000) were deported from Dorohoi; about 35,000 from Cernovita; and about 40,000 from the Jews remaining in the Bucovina. From Bessarabia itself; too, smaller groups were sent to Transnistria. From Transylvania, Jews were deported only individually. Those deported to Transnistria were allowed to take with them only as much of their possessions as they could carry. The rest of their property fell to the newly-founded Patronage Organization. Their money was changed at the rate of 40 Lei per Ruble, while the Romanians, when occupying this area, had exchanged one Ruble for one Lei. Jewelry, gold and silver were taken at a ridiculous rate. The deported came to a destroyed country. At the two changing stations of Atachi and Margulescu, their luggage and all their personal documents were confiscated, so that they arrived even without proof of identity. Correspondence with and sending of money to relatives were forbidden. Governmental help did not come at all. Epidemics of infectious diseases broke out and decimated them. In some places, the mortality reached 80%.

In June 1942, 5,000 more persons were deported from Cernovita to Transnistria. The number of deported from all provinces was about 150,000. The present status is:
From these figures, one can get a clear picture of the rate of mortality, especially among the children. The responsibility for this great injury to the health of the Jewish population lies above all with the Soviet government. Marshal Antonescu has informed me that his troops captured one by the General Staff.

But the opposition policies in Rumania cannot be considered as responsible for these crimes. They have been in a state of confusion, not knowing what to do with the millions of Jews murdered during the past year.

(2) Prevalent prejudices against the Jews.

(a) Transnistria. About 20,000 Jews were sent across the Bug, where they were taken over to work for the East Organization. With insufficient food, they had to do the most difficult work, and, with few exceptions, were shot mercilessly after the job was accomplished. The 50,000 Jews living in Transnistria today are in danger of being directly in the zone behind the German front.

With regard to the Jewish population, I offer this resume of figures:

| Number of Jews in Rumania in 1930 | About 100,000 |
| Loss of the East Transnistria territory | About 150,000 |
| Captured or deported voluntarily with the Russians | 50,000 |
| Balance | 200,000 |
| Total there live in | About 50,000 |
| Transnistria | 270,000 |
| in the rest of Rumania | 200,000 |

This means that there exist in 1944: 200,000 to be accounted for. 380,000

Before my departure from Washington I was told by Assistant Secretary of State Long, that pressure has been brought upon the Ro-
The Government of the Republic of Gaza, as a consequence of the events that have occurred, has decided to issue a proclamation to the Jews living in Gaza. After careful consideration of the circumstances and the recommendations of the committee appointed for the purpose, I am authorized to notify the assembled representatives of the Jewish community that the Jews in Gaza are no longer subject to the authority of the United States. The proclamation is to be read to the assembled representatives.

The Jewish population in Gaza is estimated at 30,000. The proclamation is a result of the recent developments in the region. The Jews in Gaza have been granted the right to return to their homes and properties. The proclamation is issued to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish community in Gaza.

The proclamation is signed by the President of the Republic of Gaza.

[Proclamation text]

The Jews in Gaza are no longer subject to the authority of the United States. The Jews in Gaza have the right to return to their homes and properties. The proclamation is issued to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish community in Gaza.
C. Greece. The Jewish population in Greece was previously concentrated for the most part in Salonika, about 50,000, while another 20,000 lived in Athens. Creta, etc. At the beginning of March 1943 the Germans expelled all the Jews from Salonika to Poland. This exodus was affected within the short period of two weeks. Of the whole Jewish community in Salonika only about 3,000 succeeded in escaping to Athens and another 3,000 to the Islands, where they are living in hiding and deprived of all means of existence. About 60 Jewish families of Turkish origin were saved and repatriated by the Turkish Legation, while another
group of 380 Spanish refugees were protected by the Spanish Government and efforts are being made for their return to
Spain with a view to their immigration to Palestine.

In Hungary, I do not intend to give any protracted or detailed picture of the situation in Hungary as it does not at the present time constitute an acute problem situation. On the contrary, as you are undoubtedly informed, the Hungarian Government has recently been relatively humane in its attitude towards the minorities in offering them chance of entry into Hungary from the German-occupied countries and permitting the organization of methods for their safety and safe exit to other countries. The suggestion had been made the special publicity of a congratulatory nature be employed to encourage the Hungarians to proceed with and further their program of enlightenment. The delicacy of the situation and the possibility of momentary change may such that I should not recommend any such propaganda at this moment. While the Hungarians have recently become "noble" compared with their neighboring satellites, even their work has been of a limited nature and some statements which might encourage them to feel that they had done a satisfactory job in this field of interesting minorities less ferociously might lead them to terminate their efforts and to decide that they had already won an honorable place at the Peace Table.

F. France. As stated in my telegram No. 295 of February 19th, Ambassador Steinhardt had, prior to my arrival here, been exerting every effort to influence the Turkish Government to repatriate 10,000 Jews in France who were allegedly divested of their Turkish nationality by operation of Turkish law. These Jews of Turkish origin (many of whom admittedly must go back many generations to establish Turkish origin) were reported as about to be deported to Poland. On February 18th Ambassador Steinhardt spoke with the British Ambassador here who, at his request, sent a note to the Foreign Office in support of a note previously sent by our Ambassador concerning the plight of these Jews in France of Turkish origin. In so doing the British Ambassador supported the request made by Ambassador Steinhardt to the Foreign Minister personally on two occasions to make the necessary representations to the Vichy Government that Jews of Turkish origin not be expelled from France. On March 3rd in Istanbul I interviewed the first Jewish refugees who had arrived from France in the last week. They reported to me that the Jews in France of Turkish origin numbered about 10,000 and of these the Turkish Government had thus far authorized entrance visas to Turkey for about 700. They stated with a degree of authority that several thousand Jews of Turkish origin had been deported to Poland, notwithstanding repeated protests by the Turkish
Ambassador in Vichy, France. I attach copies of the contents of the official bulletins made public in France announcing the de-
cision of the Vichy Government regarding the fate of these
people. (Exhibit D).

Ambassador Steinmetz informs me that the Turkish Ambassador
in Vichy is continuing his efforts and doing everything within
his power to stop further deportations from France. I urge that
the Board consider means whereby it might exert pressure indirect-
ly on the Vichy Government to bring about an immediate end to
these deportations. A telegram on this subject is being sent to
you within a few days.

Respectfully submitted,

Fra A. Hirschmann
Attaché

Enclosures:
Exhibit A - Memorandum from Dr. Albert Roman.
Exhibit B - Memoranda of conversations with
Dr. Floyd H. Black together with
Istanbul Despatch No. 199 and letter
from a Bulgarian woman of March 15,
1943, regarding persecution.
Exhibit C - Copy of Despatch No. 2516 of February
26, 1944, from Istanbul.
Exhibit D - Copy of official bulletin re decision
of Vichy Government on treatment of
Jews.
February 1, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

Jacob Landau of the American Jewish Committee (Judge Proskauer's group) advised me today that Breckinridge Long had just informed him that the Turkish Government on January 31, 1944, agreed to extend the passports of the refugees in France who are naturalized Turkish citizens. This action will have the effect of saving the individuals involved from deportation by the German authorities.

F. Hodel