

Programs with Potential in Relief
and Resettlement of Refugees: Other
Means of Effecting Rescues

Means of Granting of Turkish Citizenship
to Refugees in France

000202

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OUTGOING TELEGRAM 2 p.m.

was Ref Bl-Pelle

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

CONTROL COPY

EMBASSY.

LISBON.
1957

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

For security reasons the text of this message must be enclosed in a separate envelope.

QUOTE 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 Haidari? World Jewish Congress, Leon Kubowitzki UNQUOTE.

HULL
(GLW)

WRB:MMV:KG
7/10/44

ME

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SFP 20 1972

000203

1119
BOARD
N.D.C.

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR ROSE AND DEXTER, LISBON, PORTUGAL

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 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 Maidari?

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
LEON KUBOWITZKI UNQUOTE

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO LISBON NO. 53

July 7, 1944
10:30 a.m.

Ba. L.S.L.
Enclosure 7/6/44

copy sent to WRB
7/8/44
F.H.H.

000204

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS
CONGRES JUIF MONDIAL • CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

1834 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, 23, N. Y.

CABLES: CONGRESS, NEW YORK
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 6-1900

July 5, 1944

LONDON
55 New Cavendish St, W 1

GENEVA
37 Quai Wilson

BUENOS AIRES
Corrientes 1979

JERUSALEM
Vaad Leumi P. O. B. 471

MONTREAL
1121 St. Catherine St. W

MEXICO CITY
Sonora 174-4

In reply refer
to: No. 138

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

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 Haidari?"

Thanking you in advance, I remain

Sincerely yours

A. Leon Kubowitzki
A. Leon Kubowitzki, Head
Rescue Department

ALK:ef

000205

Wm. Eugene Bell
Mr. Peltz
Copy

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

TO: American Embassy, Athens
FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: July 21, 1944

CONTROL COPY

Reference is made to the War Refugee Board.
A report of July 17, 1944, is referred to herewith.
The Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the course of one
of his recent visits with me, stated he should do everything within his power
to get the Jews out of France and claim their nationality. I
was informed by the Minister that on several occasions the Turkish Ambassador
in Athens had given specific instructions to do everything within his
power to get the Jews out of France, and that it was indicated from the
very beginning that the Turkish Ambassador had been very ready
to receive in Greece the Jews claiming their nationality. It was
indicated in Greece that the Ambassador's efforts had been entirely successful
in getting the authorities in Vichy to "close the door" in
that country to the Jews in France who claim their nationality. I have not
the impression that Spain, since it has not seen their ancestors
left Spain several generations ago.
I discussed with the Spanish Minister, with whom I have had talks,
that he had made representations to the government of Vichy on behalf of
Spanish Jews in Greece and other Axis occupied countries. I offered to
support his representations to the Turkish Foreign Office should he wish

me to

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 20 1972

000200

no to go to go, it was... Minister that I would be informed by
his... further discuss
the...

WASHINGTON

SECRET

84 2 18 1948

WASHINGTON D.C.
AVE BELUCCE BOVJO
RECEIVED

000207

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Ankara
DATED: May 13, 1944
NUMBER: 425

Wa Refugee Bd (m) (bhb)
copy only
CONTROL COPY

This is 425 Cable No. 35.

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.

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

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 20 1972

000208

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.

HULL

NOV 11 AM 11 02

RECEIVED
STATE DEPT.
NOV 11 1938

100203

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR STEINHARDT, ANKARA, FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

This is NRS Cable No. 35.

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.

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 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.

May 10, 1944
10:15 a.m.

Ba. Jio
BAksin:jp

5/6/44

000210

736

Files 222

TURKISH EMBASSY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

No. 999/93

May 6, 1944

W. R. B. _____
Filing Authority
To: Files
Ans. _____
No. Ans. Req.
Initial _____
Date _____

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

My dear Mr. Pehle:

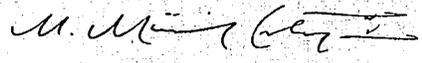
I wish to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 3, 1944, concerning the plight of the Jews claiming Turkish nationality in France, and to inform you that upon representations from the World Jewish Congress and the Venezuelan Embassy I had brought this matter to the attention of my Government. 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

10021

MAY 3 1944

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

Permit me 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 that position 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.

Mailed 7/1/44

LS Lesserials 4/29/44

*B.G. L.H. Revere + stamp
by Burke -
MAY 21 1944
JWP*

100211

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRES JUIF MONDIAL . . CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

330 WEST 42nd STREET
NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

*1834 Broadway
NY 23*

CABLES: CONGRESS, NEW YORK
TELEPHONE: LONGACRE 5-2600

April 27, 1944

LONDON
55 New Cavendish St., W 1

GENEVA
37 Quai Wilson

BUENOS AIRES
Corrientes 2024-90

JERUSALEM
Voad Leumi, P.O.B. 471

MONTREAL
1121 St. Catherine St. W

MEXICO CITY
Sonora 174-4

Hon. John W. Pehle, Executive Director
War Refugee 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:

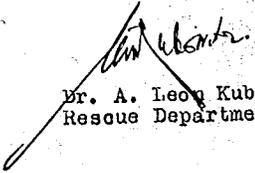
"It was about 1935 that a law was promulgated in Ankara, cancelling the nationality of thousands of Jews living abroad. They were to make special applications in case they should like to be recognized as Turkish citizens. All of them have made out the necessary applications, but many of them have been 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. Travers, 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,


Dr. A. Leo Kubowitzki, Head
Rescue Department

ALK:ef
Enc.

700213

C O P Y

TURKISH EMBASSY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

No. 773/540

April 12, 1944

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

ef

C O P Y

January 27, 1944

Re: VD 840.48 Refugees/4980

Hon. Howard K. Travers, Chief
Visa Division
Department of State
Washington, 25, 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 this in mind the World Jewish Congress wishes to stress the fact that the French authorities (Prefectures de Police) refused to recognize this denationalization 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 fate 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

hon. Howard K. Travers

-2-

January 27, 1944

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:Gls

ef

700210

CONTROL COPY

3 - w w Ref
Bel (Mr.
Behle)

GEM-604

PLAIN

Lisbon

Dated April 29, 1944

Rec'd 3:52 a.m., 30th.

gpc

Secretary of State,
Washington

1304, Twentyninth, 6 p.m.

WRB 10 FROM SCHWARTZ FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD AND
LEAVITT

Joint Distribution Committee New York, "Blickenstaff
has now received list 770 names approved by French
authorities for North African camp including 365 sephardim
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 Steinhardt
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 these instructions being faithfully carried out,
Concerning Canadian immigration project difficult under-
stand 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

5/1/44
Message sent
to court.

MEV
EH

00021

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

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

"Blickenstaff has now received list 770 names approved by French authorities for North African camp including 365 sephardim 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 Steinhardt 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 these 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."

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

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

FH:lab 5/2/44 *JW*

APR 27 1944

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 now Greece 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, 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 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 BELLACITIA arrived yesterday Istanbul from Rumania carrying one hundred thirty children twenty escorts."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

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

JW
FH:lab 4/27/44

10022

CONTROL COPY

*5- War Refugee Bd
Mrs. Pella*

RMN-185

PLAIN

Lisbon

Dated April 25, 1944

Rec'd 11:28 p.m.

DIVISION OF

APR 26 1944

COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

Secretary of State
Washington.

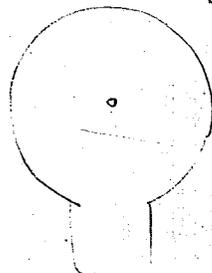
1242, twentyfifth, 5 p.m.

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

"36 Turkish repatriates from Greece arrived Istanbul
receiving our full assistance. Small group Portuguese
nationals now Greece 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, Ankara, and we taking up matter
Madrid but help your end important. Approximately six
thousand Turkish nationals France whose status repatri-
ation uncertain now in precarious situation. Ambas-
sador 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

*Did Mr
we call
Tittman to
ask the
Vaticans
to intercede
1108 Madrid
April 21*



-2-#1242, twentyfifth, 5 p.m., Lisbon

Red Cross ship BELLA CITTA arrived yesterday Istanbul
from Rumania carrying one hundred thirty children
twenty escorts".

NORWEB

LMS

000220

CONTROL COPY

*2 - War Refugee
Bd (M...
B...)*

RECT-561
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (BR)

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

Secretary of State,
Washington.

^X
732, April 22, 3 p.m.

FOR THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD FROM THE AMBASSADOR.

Ankara number 43.

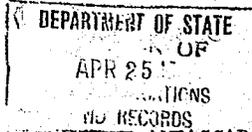
I perceive no objection to the Board raising with
the Turkish Ambassador in Washington the danger of
deportation to approximately 800 Jews in France who
claim Turkish nationality.

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

W2D



10022

CONTROL COPY SERIAL 3547

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

April 19, 1944
8 p.m.

*H. J. Ref
Bd. Ref.
Publ*

EMBASSY

AEK:PA.
350
FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WRB No 24.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

Files

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 Consuls 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
(GLW)

WRB:OLV:KG
4/19/44

WE

NE

110220

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 WRB ANKARA CABLE NO. 24

April 15, 1944
2:15 p.m.

FH:lab 4/14/44

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

JH JMS

110220

INCOMING CABLE

LISBON

1492

FA 42 BX 16160 LISBOA 123 27 2015 Received and Stencilled April 4, 1944

MLT LEAVITT
JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
270 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

792 SAMUEL SEGUERRA BARCELONA ADVISES THERE ARE NOW APPROXIMATELY EIGHT HUNDRED 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 RENDERS THEIR CONDITION CRITICAL AND THEM SUBJECT TO DEPORTATION STOP URGENT
YOU MAKE NECESSARY INTERVENTIONS THROUGH WAR REFUGEE 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
FRANCE SHOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO PROTECT THESE PEOPLE AND ARRANGE THEIR REPATRIATION
ADVISE

JOSEPH SCHWARTZ

se

100221

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 to 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 6, Hirschman reported that he was 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

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 to 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 6, Hirschman reported that he was 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.

RLSmith:dh 4/14/44

R. P. Smith

Ankara, March 13, 1944.

No. 596

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

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

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

Respectfully yours,

Laurence A. Steinhardt

Enclosure:
Report as described.

840-1
ELP/mp

To Department in original and hectograph.

cc: Chauncey, Abrahamson, Akin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pollak, Rains, Smith, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Pehle, 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.

Despatch #574 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 rescued 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

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 20 1972

three satellite countries mentioned above. (On this question of the nine families there still exists some confusion of interpretation 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 Kemal Aziz Paymann, 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 releases. 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. Maby'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 connection 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 to have the full data--name, date, where and when born, present address, etc. (This requires from 2 to 3 weeks)
- (2) These lists are then sent to authorities 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 authorization. (This requires from 2 to 3 weeks)
- (4) London officials send the authorized list to the British passport officer at Istanbul, Major Whittall who is very cooperative. (This requires from 2 to 3 weeks.)

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Notes: Since writing the above we have succeeded in consolidating these four steps into one 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. Maby in the British Embassy at Ankara which contains the names of the nine families. (This requires 1 week.)

(6) Maby then sends a note to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs containing the names of the nine families from the three satellite countries. (This requires 3 or 4 days.)

(7) This list then reaches the hands of Aziz Zamil Payisam 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 outlined above have been obtained, the names are dispatched to the Turkish consuls at Bucharest, Budapest and Sofia (now Plovdiv due to bombing of Sofia.) (This requires from 2 to 3 weeks.)

In this manner 1200 names had been approved in the period since September 1943. In addition, an agreement had been obtained from the Palestine government to permit 5,000 Jewish refugee children to come into Palestine provided means of transportation could be arranged, in groups of 75 to 150 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 some 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 on 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

Turkish 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 consultations with British officials including the British Minister to Turkey, Mr. J. C. Sterndale Bennett, Mr. A. Knox Helm, British Counselor of Embassy, Mr. Maby (on whose shoulders the routine of this work had fallen) and the aforementioned Kemal Aziz 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 en 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. 344, February 26th, 5 p.m.

In a consultation on March 3rd with Kemal Aziz 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

900 children by boat. The parents of the children in the Balkans were willing to release the children in order to give them the opportunity of a new life. Negotiations had been opened between Mr. Darlan of the Jewish Agency, with the assistance of the Ambassador personally, and a Mr. Kalkavan Bina, Turkish shipowner of the SS WATAN (3700 tons) as noted in telegram No. 282 of February 18. The plan was to take the boat with a Turkish crew from Istanbul to Constanza and to return to Istanbul with about 900 Jewish refugees, mainly children from Transnistria whom the Rumanians were said to be willing to release. The negotiations were making slow progress, as the Turkish authorities who control all shipping at first refused to permit the shipowner to enter into the proposed charter agreement due to the extremely limited number of ships available for their commerce at this time and their fear of losing the ship by means of submarines even if safe conduct could be secured by the International Red Cross which had promised to procure such safe conduct from all of the belligerent powers. As a result of your 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 at this writing the possibility of securing the authorization from the Turkish authorities is more promising. The consent of the Turkish Cabinet will however be necessary. In this connection I desire to add that I have had the fullest and most wholehearted cooperation from Ambassador Steinhardt personally and the members of his able 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 Constanza 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, as the ship must ply through waters of the Black Sea and Aegean Sea adjacent to islands controlled by the Russians and Germans and without this 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 Geneva 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 determined 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 en route to Salonica to tow the Swedish ship CAMELIA 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. 360 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. Ahmet Remzi Goneno, 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 can be provided and administrative routine relaxed. It was reported by the refugees who were interviewed by me and who had just arrived that the pressure of the Nazi military had somewhat eased prior to their departure. In this connection I am appending a memorandum from Dr. Albert Romano, President of the Zionist Organization 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. Floyd 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 W. Bonaker, 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

of State during an absence of residence. The following
grants receivable should be reported to the
Department in the next report, and the
Department should be kept advised of any
change of State during an absence of residence.

and the Turkish and British consuls stationed
in Bulgaria at the present time, particularly
the Jews there are being held. The latter who
have a political and religious character, the
Jews will be the scapegoats. I did not see any
Greek troops on the last days of October as before.
I was convinced that preference was given to
the Zionists in the choice of those who were permitted
exit visas through the Jews. And as I have noticed,
I have regularly visited the Turkish Embassy in Sofia
and was always told that there were no visas for Jews.
Even after my visa came through, it was necessary to
bribe the petty Turkish official. There are in some
hands of bribery getting on, so-called "black" in
this (mean) stock.

"I was interned for six and a half months in a
village south of Sofia. My family is in Plovdiv
(Burgas) and is not allowed. I was free to law but
not to work. I was told that I was interned because
I was a friend of the British Consul, which I was.
I am convinced from my observations that pressure can
be brought on the present Bulgarian Government not to
persecute further the minorities. I had managed to
obtain some small means by indirection, but the poor
people, which constitute the largest number of refu-
gees, are allowed no means of livelihood. I saw one
Jewish man killed before me because he was in the
street after curfew hours. No one has to account
for killing. There is no law or need for this in
respect of minorities. All efforts to bring out
these children have failed. The situation is rap-
idly disintegrating and they will soon have no means
to live. The fifty children who I am told will fin-
ally come to Istanbul on March 3rd or 5th* have been
on the way for two years. Most of the parents are
willing to sacrifice themselves and let the children
go."

He came through on March 5th, as reported to you.

Indications

(1) Program - The program was that the aircraft was to be used for the purpose of the program. The aircraft was to be used for the purpose of the program. The aircraft was to be used for the purpose of the program.

The program was to be used for the purpose of the program. The program was to be used for the purpose of the program. The program was to be used for the purpose of the program. The program was to be used for the purpose of the program. The program was to be used for the purpose of the program.

In January 1941, the Iron Guard openly revolted against King Carol II and General Antonescu. For three days the leaders of the Iron Guard (led by Bucharest) during these three days, about 150 Jews were assassinated in the most terrible manner.

The pogroms reached their height with the re-occupation of the Bukovina and Bessarabia in June 1941. The following statistical data offers a picture of the number of victims:

Before the outbreak of this war, about 900,000 Jews lived in Rumania. They were divided as follows: 250,000 in actual Rumania, 250,000 in Transylvania, 300,000 in Bessarabia, and 100,000 in the Bucovina. About 150,000 must be deducted from this total, as living in the part of Rumania taken over by Hungary. When the army entered 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 Czernovitz and Storozhinets (Bucovina) 12,000 Jews were shot. In other towns of actual Rumania and Transylvania, 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 Czernovitz; and about 40,000 from the Jews remaining in the Bucovina. From Rumania 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 Rumanians, when occupying this area, had exchange 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 Margulesti, 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. At some places, the mortality reached 40%.

In June 1942, 5,000 more persons were deported from Czernovitz to Transnistria. The number of deported from all provinces was about 150,000. The present status is:

about 23,000 from Transnistria;
 12,000 from the rest of the occupied
 12,000 from Bessarabia;
 15,000 autochthonous Jews.

Of the 18,000 Jews from Bessarabia, only 5,700 survived, who, in the most terrible conditions, were repatriated during the last weeks.

From these figures one can get a clear picture of the rate of mortality, especially among the children. The responsibility for this piece of wholesale butchery of the Jewish population lies above all with the leader of the Government, Marshal Antonescu, who, I am informed, had his orders carried out by the General Staff.

But the opposition parties in Rumania cannot be considered as free from fault with regard to these crimes. They had been informed of everything that was to ensue and did not use their influence to prevent this mass slaughter.

(d) Practical proposals for saving the Jews.

(1) Transnistria. About 50,000 Jews were sent across the Bug, where they were taken over to work for the Text 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 1940	about 900,000
Less: a/ the lost Transylvanian territory,	about 150,000
b/ captured or departed voluntarily	
with the Russians	50,000
Balance	700,000

Today there live in:	
a/ Transnistria	about 50,000
b/ in the rest of Rumania	270,000

This means that there exist in 1944	<u>320,000</u>
To be accounted for	<u>380,000</u>

Before my departure from Washington I was told by Assistant Secretary of State Long that pressure has been brought upon the Ru-

The Government of the Department of State, as a consequence of the fact that the Rumanians are alleged to have repatriated the Jews deported from Transylvania to Rumania. After 6,000 Jews had been repatriated, the Germans intervened and the Jews' status was changed. I was told that a report was received by the Department of State from a source in Bucharest that the United States is expected to contribute \$200,000 to cover the expenses of the Rumanian Government and American Jews who Balkan countries. The Rumanian Government has the authority for this state and the event that the War Refugee Board is expected to be the Department of State regarding the

The Rumanian Government is to secure the release of the Jews who are being held in the Rumanian camps. At the present time the Rumanian Government is expected to permit the Jews to be repatriated and for as long as to find means of transportation through Turkey to Palestine, which is the only country where provision has been made for the Rumanian Government's number of refugees.

Specific attention is again directed to the fact that the Rumanian Government is held primarily responsible for the policy leading to these atrocities. General Antonescu enjoys a brilliant page in the fields of infamy. I have been told that Mr. A. Cretzianu, the newly appointed Rumanian Minister in Ankara, has the Marshal's confidence and is ideologically and sentimentally opposed to the Government's anti-Semitic policy. At the proper moment, with Ambassador Steinhardt's consent and employing the authority vested in me by the War Refugee Board to deal with the emergency, I expect to approach Mr. Cretzianu and possibly others who have connections with the present Rumanian Government. Before these talks you may be assured that I will first consult with Ambassador Steinhardt and use every discretion not to make any statements which could be interpreted as having a bearing on the present political or diplomatic situation between Rumania and the United States.

The Jewish population in Rumania, which was estimated at the beginning of the war at about 900,000, is now considerably reduced by: 1) mass massacres of the Jews in Bessarabia and Bucovina; 2) the annexation of provinces of Transylvania to Hungary; 3) the flight of Jews from Bucovina to Russia at the beginning of the war with Russia. The greater part of the Jews from Bessarabia and Bucovina (about 180,000) were expelled to Transnistria (the area previously belonging to Russia). Of

This number of about 75,000 Jews would include, while 20,000 died or were killed during the period of their captivity. The total number of Jews in Russia may be estimated as follows:

Old Russia:	Poland	100,000	
	Ukraine	25,000	
	Czechoslovakia	2,000	
	Various	22,000	155,000
Belarus			10,000
Transylvania			25,000
	Total		215,000

The Jews in Transylvania are living only in one or two ghettos. They are concentrated in about 40 camps and are divided into three categories: 1) Ghetto Jews who are allowed to work, mostly agricultural, from Bucharest; 2) Ghettos in Sibiu, etc.; 3) concentration camps, employed at forced labor. Their situation is very dangerous now that the Russian troops approach. The Jews are in serious danger of being massacred by the Hunnish bands during the period of retreat.

C. Yugoslavia. The whole population of 75,000 Jews who lived in peace in Yugoslavia has disappeared except for a number of about 2,000 Jews living in concentration camps, near Zagreb. A considerable number of Yugoslav Jews, about 12,000, escaped to Italy, where the war has reached their ears. It is probable that these Jews will attempt to return to Yugoslavia at the first opportunity after the reoccupation of the country by the Allied forces, and this problem requires special attention now. A number of Yugoslav refugees in Italy, about 4,000, mostly children are registered for immigration into Palestine, but unless shipping accommodation can be found at an early date, they will also have to return to Yugoslavia. It may be added that a considerable number of Yugoslav refugees are also scattered in Hungary where they are tolerated, together with many other Jewish refugees from Poland, Slovakia, etc.

D. Greece. The Jewish population in Greece was previously concentrated for the most part in Salonika, about 60,000, while another 10,000 to 12,000 lived in Athens, Crete, etc. At the beginning of March 1943 the Germans expelled all the Jews from Salonika to Poland. This exodus was effected 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 Govern-
ment and efforts are being made for their return in transit
Spain with a view to their emigration to Palestine.

E. 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 problematic situation.
On the contrary, as you are undoubtedly informed, the Hungarian
Government has recently been relatively human in its attitude
towards the minorities in offering them means of entry into Hun-
gary from the German-occupied countries and permitting the or-
ganization 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 Hungar-
ians to proceed with and further their program of enlightenment.
The delicacy of the situation and the possibility of momentary
change are such that I should not recommend any such propaganda
at this moment. While the Hungarians have recently become "nobles"
compared with their neighboring satellites, even their work has
been of a limited nature and any statements which might encourage
them to feel that they had done a satisfactory job in this field
of mistreating minorities less ferociously might lead them to ter-
minate 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 Feb-
ruary 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 decision of the Vichy Government regarding the fate of these people. (Exhibit D).

Ambassador Steinhardt 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 indirectly 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,

Ira A. Hirschmann
Attache

Enclosures:

- Exhibit A - Memorandum from Dr. Albert Romano.
- Exhibit B - Memoranda of conversations with Dr. Floyd R. Black together with Istanbul Despatch No. 188 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 bulletins re decision of Vichy Government on treatment of Jews.

Official File Copy

February 1, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

Jacob Landow 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