Terms with Respect to Relief
and Rescue of Refugees: Cooperation
with Other Agencies

International Red Cross

Copy with attachment JKC

28 1945

Dear Mr. Huber:

This is to acknowledge receipt of and thank you for your letter of July 6, 1945, (S/4/a) with which you enclosed a photostat copy of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee "News," in which tribute is paid to the International Red Cross for its activities in behalf of European Jews.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

Mr. Charles Huber,
Delegate,
International Committee of the Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue,
Washington 9, D. C.

EBT:inp 7/27/45

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

July 6th, 1945.

In replying, refer to (S/4/a)

Brigadier General O'Dwyer,
Executive Director,
Executive Office of the President,
War Refugee Board,
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

Dear General O'Dwyer,

The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva has requested us by their communication dated April 5th, 1945, to transmit to you for information, a photostat copy of a publication which the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee had published in New York, relative to part of the activities of the I.C.R.C. in favour of Hebrews in Europe.

We would thank you to acknowledge receipt of this document at your convenience, in order to complete our records on the subject.

We beg to remain,

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES HUBER,
Delegate.

sgc.
encl. 1

J.D.C. Lauds International Red Cross Cooperation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reports reaching the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee from Europe unanimously hail the International Red Cross for its outstanding role in the rescue and maintenance of persecuted European Jewry. "Thousands of Jews in newly liberated lands and in German concentration camps," announces Joseph C. Hyman, Executive Vice-Chairman of the J.D.C., "owe their lives to the sanctuary and the help given them by the International Red Cross."

Work of the International Red Cross in Europe in behalf of Jews may be divided into four categories: the shipment of relief (food, clothing and medicines) from Geneva to occupied countries or camps in Germany; shipment of relief from other areas to camps in Germany; transmission of funds for the purchase of food and clothing, and the creation of children's homes, hospitals and soup kitchens.

In all instances, strict precautions have been and are being taken to prevent any supplies from being diverted from the persons for whom they are intended. The International Red Cross and the J.D.C. operate only where control can be exercised and where sufficient guarantee can be furnished to the authorities responsible for the blockade.

In Axis-controlled Hungary, for example, the International Red Cross worked in several ways. Although it was unable to protect the Jews from deportation, the I.R.C., in agreement with the representative of the "Joint," did remit 6,000,000 pengo to its delegate and to representatives of the Jewish Council of Budapest. At the same time it shipped a carload of foodstuffs from Geneva to Budapest. Because of transportation difficulties, all supplies were purchased on the Hungarian market with funds made available by the J.D.C. Delegates of the International Red Cross were permitted to visit certain labor camps to see that the treatment of Jewish workmen was as humane as possible. They frequently approached the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to call attention to unsatisfactory conditions and requested amelioration of the treatment of internees. Similar action was taken in

(more)

[illegible]

[illegible] Here again the International Red Cross conducted its activities of aforesaid. It began work in this field in the summer of 1943, having been given a promise of cooperation by General Antonescu. J.D.C. remitted hundreds of thousands of dollars through the I.R.C. for the relief of persecuted Jews. With these funds the International Red Cross bought food, clothing and medicines. It also provided relief for Jews transported to Transnistria and investigated conditions in camps for deported Jews. It aided those interned in Rumanian camps as well as those drafted for compulsory labor. Its work included aid to Rumanian Jews at liberty throughout the country as well as Jews from other countries temporarily in Romania.

Of incomparable value were I.R.C.'s attempts to persuade the Rumanian authorities to cease the persecution of Jews. When the official attitude changed in 1944, I.R.C. was able to obtain substantial concessions. With J.D.C. subventions the International Committee was able to purchase underwear and clothing which were distributed by the Jewish community of Bucharest; to send foodstuffs for needy Jews; give cash aid to be used for clothing, rent and food for war victims, and transmit four carloads of food from Turkey to Romania.

A delegate of the I.R.C. is surveying Jewish needs in North Italy, preparatory to arranging assistance from the J.D.C.

In Croatia, three internment camps are known and visited. Recently 3,000 packages purchased with funds made available by J.D.C. were distributed among the internees. These packages were transported under the protection of the International Committee in Zagreb. The only request in Croatia which could not be met was an appeal for clothing, which was barred by transportation difficulties.

"In those parts of the world where J.D.C., major American agency for the rescue and relief of distressed Jews overseas, cannot itself work directly," added Mr. Hyman, "we know we can count on the International Red Cross, as well as the governmental agencies, to act for us in bringing aid to suffering Jewry."

2/14/46

JUL 23 1945

Dear Mr. Huber:

For General O'Dwyer, I wish to acknowledge with thanks your letter of July 11, 1945, forwarding a letter from Mr. Max Huber, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, to General O'Dwyer.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

Mr. Charles Huber, Delegate,
International Committee of the
Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Ave., N.W.,
Washington 9, D. C.

FH:hd 7/23/45

Intended copy not rec'd in files

MAY 22 1945

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross recently forwarded to us the following translation of a communication from its Geneva headquarters which may be of interest to you:

"SUBJECT: RELIEF IN FAVOUR OF HEBREWS IN SERBIA.
We have just received a telegram from our Delegation in Bucarest, dated March 26th, giving us the following information:-
The Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Belgrad has communicated to our Delegation in Bucarest the following figures in respect of Hebrews still in Yugoslavia. These figures have been supplied by Dr. Pops, representative of the Hebrews in Belgrad:-

in BELGRAD:	483 men		
	697 women		
	283 children	1,463 persons.	
in SKOPLJE		360 ")	
in BITOLJ		86 ")	Macedonia
in Veles		78 ")	
in Pristina		176 ")	
in Nisleskovac		28 "	Serbia
in Subotica Backabacka		462 "	
in Novisad Backa		173 "	
in Zemun		30 "	near Belgrad
in Djulovac		111 "	
in Vrsacsenta		28 "	Banat
in Somber Backa and Petrovgrad		49 "	Banat
in Banija Topusko Glina Kordun		670 "	Croatia
in Split		200 "	
	TOTAL	3,914 "	

"Most of the children in Belgrad are orphans. The question of housing is extremely difficult. A complete lack of shoes, clothing and underclothing is registered on the market of Serbia. A popular kitchen is functioning. The first relief distributed has been of 6,000 dinars per adult, and 1,000 dinars per child.

We are transmitting the foregoing for your information."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Acting Executive Director

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

EBT:inp 5/19/45

MAY 18 1945

Dear Mr. Huber:

This is to acknowledge receipt of and thank you for your letter of May 14, 1945, (S/4/p), quoting for our information a translation of a communication from your Geneva headquarters concerning the relief of Hebrews in Serbia.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Charles Huber,
Delegate,
International Committee of the
Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

EBT:inp 5/16/45

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

May 14th, 1945.

In replying, refer to (S/4/p)

Brigadier General O'Dwyer,
Executive Director,
Executive Office of the President,
WAR REFUGEE BOARD,
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear General O'Dwyer,

We have been requested by our Headquarters in Geneva, to communicate to you for information, the contents of a letter we have just received, dated April 9th, 1945. Please find a translation below:-

"SUBJECT: RELIEF IN FAVOUR OF HEBREWS IN SERBIA.
We have just received a telegram from our Delegation in Bucarest, dated March 26th, giving us the following information:-
The Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Belgrad has communicated to our Delegation in Bucarest the following figures in respect of Hebrews still in Yugoslavia. These figures have been supplied by Dr. Pops, representative of the Hebrews in Belgrad:-

in BELGRAD:	483 men		
	697 women		
	283 children	1,463 persons.	
in SKOPLJE		360 "	Macedonia
in BITOLJ		86 "	Macedonia
in Veles		78 "	Macedonia
in Pristina		176 "	Macedonia
in Nisleskovac		28 "	Serbia
in Subotica Backabacka		462 "	
in Novisad Backa		173 "	
in Zemun		30 "	near Belgrad
in Djulovac		111 "	
in Vrsacsenta		28 "	Banat
in Sombor Backa and Petrovgrad		49 "	Banat
in Banija Topusko Glina Kordun		670 "	Croatia
in Split		200 "	
	TOTAL	3,916 "	

..../....

Brigadier General O'Dwyer,
War Refugee Board.

Ref: S/4/p.

"Most of the children in Belgrad are orphans. The question of housing is extremely difficult. A complete lack of shoes, clothing and under-clothing is registered on the market of Serbia. A popular kitchen is functioning. The first relief distributed has been of 6,000 dinars per adult, and 1,000 dinars per child.

We are transmitting the foregoing for your information.".

We would thank you to kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter at your convenience, and oblige.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES HUBER,
Delegate.

sgc.

MAY 16 1945

Dear Mr. Huber:

This is to acknowledge receipt of and thank you for your letter of May 11, 1945, (S/2/h), giving us information received from your Geneva headquarters concerning medicaments shipped to Zagreb.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Charles Huber,
Delegate,
International Committee of the
Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue,
Washington 9, D. C.

EBT:inp 5/15/45

MAY 16 1945

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

We have just received from the Delegate of the International Red Cross the following translation of a communication from his Geneva headquarters:

> "The Joint Relief Commission informs us that following a communication from our Delegate in ZAGREB, the shipment of medicaments valued at Swiss Fr. 23,594.85, against the contribution of $100,000.00 made by the Joint through the War Refugee Board, has arrived in good condition. We would request that you communicate this information to the War Refugee Board."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Acting Executive Director

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

EBT:inp 5/15/45

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

May 11th, 1945.

In replying, refer to (S/2/h)

Brigadier General O'Dwyer, Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

Dear Sir,

We have just received a communication from our Geneva Headquarters, relative to medicaments shipped to Zagreb, with request that we give you this information. For your guidance, we give you below a translation of the letter received:

> "The Joint Relief Commission informs us that following a communication from our Delegate in ZAGREB, the shipment of medicaments valued at Swiss Fr. 23,594.85, against the contribution of $100,000.00 made by the Joint through the War Refugee Board, has arrived in good condition. We would request that you communicate this information to the War Refugee Board."

In order that our files may be kept in order, we would ask you to kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES HUBER,
Delegate.

sgc.

MAR 28 1945

Dear Mr. Peter:

This is to acknowledge receipt of and thank you for your letter of March 3, 1945, (8/4/b), quoting for our information the text of a telegram sent to Geneva by the International Red Cross delegate in Bucharest.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Marc Peter,
International Committee of the
Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

EBT:inp 3/27/45

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

March 3rd, 1945.

In replying, refer to (S/4/b)

Brigadier General O'Dwyer,
Executive Director,
Executive Office of the President,
WAR REFUGEE BOARD,
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Sir,

We have just received a communication from our Headquarters in Geneva, giving us the text of a telegram dated January 16th, 1945, sent to them by our Delegate in Bucarest. We are quoting this telegram below for your information, as we feel sure that it will prove of interest to you.

"AVONS RECU VISITE GRANDRABBIN DOCTEUR SAFRAN CHEF SPIRITUEL DES JUIFS EN ROUMANIE PRESENTANT VOTRE DELEGATION PLUS VIFS REMERCIEMENTS POUR GENEROSITE ET EMPRESSEMENT POUR AIDE APPORTE POPULATION JUIVE EN ROUMANIE ET AUX DEPORTES EN TRANSNITRIE PENDANT LES ANNEES DE PERSECUTION EN NOUS CHARGEANT DE VOUS TRANSMETTRE SES SENTIMENTS DE GRATITUDE."

Sincerely yours,

MARC PETER,
Delegate.

sgc.

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL

[redacted]

Bern, January 25, 1945.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

At the request of the International Committee of the Red Cross I am transmitting to you enclosed herewith, for the Board's information, a copy of the various relief projects which the I.C.R.C. undertook with the grant of $100,000 the Committee received from the Joint Distribution Committee some months ago.

Very sincerely yours,

Roswell D. McClelland

Roswell D. McClelland
Special Assistant to
the American Minister.

P.S. The substance of this report was contained in the Legation's telegram No. 8044, of December 9, 1944.

Enclosure: Report from the I.C.R.C.

John W. Pehle, Esquire
Executive Director,
War Refugee Board,
Washington 25, D. C.

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

Concerne : Emploi du don de 100'000 $ = 429'000 Frs.s. du War Refugee Board, en faveur des réfugiés et déportés israélites de différents pays.

L'emploi de ces fonds se justifie comme suit :

	Valeur en Frs.ss.
1) Produits pharmaceutiques	100.000.-
2) Transferts de fonds en Roumanie	100.000.-
3) Envoi de vivres	229.000.-
	429.000.-

Le détail de ces rubriques se présente de la façon suivante :

	Valeur en Frs.ss.
1) PRODUITS PHARMACEUTIQUES.-	
Camp de Bergen-Belsen	
17 caisses expédiées le 24 oct.1944	19.643.-
30 caisses prêtes à l'expédition	5.550.-
Jüdische Gemeinde, Zagreb.	
35 caisses expédiées le 29 nov.1944	20.667.-
Camp de Birkenau.	
33 caisses expédiées le 11 oct.1944	16.742.-
Theresienstadt	
8 caisses expédiées le 26 juillet 1944	7.808.-
31 caisses expédiées le 2 nov.1944	7.850.-
JUS - Generalgouvernement Cracovie	
7 caisses expédiées en juillet et août 1944	6.884.-
Réfugiés israélites en Roumanie	
5 caisses expédiées, mais qui doivent être retournées en Suisse	3.800.-
Réserve	11.056.-
Montant total des dépenses . . . . . .Fr.s.	100.000.-

2) Transfert de fonds en Roumanie.

La conversion des Fr.s.100.000.- attribuée à l'oeuvre de secours pour la Roumanie a donné au cours de 330 Lei pour Fr. s.l.- un total de Lei 33.000.000.- qui ont été utilisés comme suit :

	Valeur en Lei	
Achat de vêtements et de sous-vêtements pour les rapatriés de Transnistrie	8.000.000.-	
Achat de vivres pour le "Bâteau Tari" selon détails remis en son temps à M.Saly Mayer,	15.000.000.-	env.
Secours en espèces, vêtements, logements, nourriture aux éprouvés de guerre	10.000.000.-	
	33.000.000.-	

3) Envoi de vivres.

Theresienstadt
Les 8 et 18 juillet 1944, 8'000 colis en tout ont été envoyés, contenant du fromage, des petits pois, de la marmelade de pommes, des pâtés de lièvre, du sucre, des pâtes et des biscuits, d'une valeur globale de
Fr. 89.000.-

Birkenau
Le 11 septembre, 93 caisses contenant des pâtes, des sardines et des pâtés de viande furent expédiées et 20 caisses de sucre ont été directement envoyées de Bratislava à ce camp, envoi se montant à
Fr. 40.000.-

JUS.- Generalgouvernement Cracovie
Le 31 mai, 14'500 boîtes de conserves hongroises ont été expédiées. Le 4 juillet, 15'000 kilos de potages avec additions de pâtes, marchandise de provenance slovaque et le 27 juin 6'000 kilos de haricots blancs Fr. . . . 70.000.-

Camp de Bergen-Belsen
Au mois de novembre, 2'000 kgs.de farine pour potages et 400 caisses de lait condensé, moitié sucré et moitié non-sucré ont été réexpédiées de Ratisbonne à Bergen-Belsen, après avoir été primitivement

destinées pour la Hongrie.	
	Fr. . . . 30.000.-
Fr.	229.000.-

DEC 29 1944

Dear Mr. Peter:

Thank you for your letter of December 20, 1944 (S/4/J) enclosing duplicate copies of an extract of the International Red Cross Revue, concerning relief given by the International Committee of the Red Cross to the inmates of Camp Prussikow.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Marc Peter, Delegate,
International Committee of the Red Cross,
Delegation in the United States of America,
1645 Connecticut Avenue,
Washington 9, D. C.

EUT RBHutchison:inp 12/28/44

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

December20th, 1944. In replying, refer to (S/4/1)

Mr. J.W. Pehle, Executive Director,
Executive Office of the President,
WAR REFUGEE BOARD,
Washington 25,
D.C.

Dear Mr. Pehle,

We are sending you herewith, in duplicate, and for your information, an extract of the International Red Cross Revue, treating with the relief given by the International Committee of the Red Cross, to the inmates of Camp Pruszkow.

We feel sure that this brochure will prove of interest to you.

Sincerely yours,

Marc Peter

MARC PETER,
Delegate.

sgo.
encls. 2 brochures.

La Croix-Rouge et les civils polonais du camp de Pruszkow

Extrait de la *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*
(26e année, n° 310, octobre 1944)

GENÈVE
COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
1944

La Croix-Rouge et les civils polonais du camp de Pruszkow[1]

Le représentant à Genève de la Croix-Rouge polonaise à Londres signalait au Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, le 25 août dernier, que, selon un appel transmis par la radio polonaise à Varsovie, 100.000 habitants de la capitale, en grande majorité des femmes, des enfants et des vieillards, rassemblés dans le camp de Pruszkow, à vingt kilomètres environ de Varsovie, manquaient de tout ravitaillement et se trouvaient dans une situation très critique. Des appels pressants au Comité international, émanant de diverses Croix-Rouges et en premier lieu de la Croix-Rouge polonaise à Londres, se succédèrent les jours qui suivirent. La population de la capitale polonaise a traversé et traverse encore les plus dures épreuves. Toutefois, comme on le verra plus loin, le message de la radio de Varsovie ne donnait pas une idée très exacte des conditions dans lesquelles se trouvaient les personnes rassemblées au camp de Pruszkow.

Le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge s'adressa aussitôt de la façon la plus urgente aux Gouvernements et aux Sociétés nationales de Croix-Rouge — en l'occurrence les Croix-Rouges allemande, américaine, britannique et soviétique — desquels dépendait en premier lieu l'aboutissement de cette action de secours. Il fit en particulier des démarches en vue d'être autorisé à envoyer sur place aussi vite que possible un membre de sa délégation à Berlin.

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[1] *Hors-texte.*

Le représentant de la Croix-Rouge polonaise avait aussitôt, au nom de son institution, mis des sommes importantes à la disposition de la Commission mixte de secours de la Croix-Rouge internationale, organisme créé par le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge et la Ligue des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge pour venir en aide aux populations éprouvées par la guerre. De son côté, la Croix-Rouge suédoise s'était déclarée prête à s'associer à cette action de secours par un don de 15.000 couronnes. Le Comité international, pas plus que la Commission mixte de secours, ne dispose d'autres fonds que ceux qui lui sont confiés pour des actions déterminées : d'autres apports eussent été les bienvenus, car il faut de toute évidence des fonds très importants pour être à même d'apporter une aide efficace à des centaines de milliers de personnes, à toute une population dans le malheur. Toute contribution en faveur de la population de Varsovie signifierait une amélioration de son sort et serait accueillie avec reconnaissance.

Les difficultés à résoudre pour mener à bien une telle action de secours ne sont pas uniquement d'ordre financier. Il s'agit en pareil cas pour le Comité international de trouver également les secours matériels nécessaires, d'obtenir l'autorisation de les exporter des pays où ils se trouvent, puis, s'il y a réussi, de les faire parvenir, dans le plus bref délai, aux destinataires, et cela en surmontant de très grandes difficultés.

Le transport rapide de secours dans un camp qui se trouve à proximité immédiate des opérations militaires pose, il va de soi, des problèmes difficiles. Une solution efficace eût été en l'occurrence que des avions, en nombre suffisant — étant donné qu'ils n'auraient pu emporter que deux à cinq tonnes de secours — parachutassent des vivres et des médicaments. Mais l'envoi d'avions ne peut se faire qu'avec l'assentiment des belligérants et de tous les pays survolés. Les efforts faits immédiatement par le Comité international en vue de réaliser un tel projet se sont malheureusement heurtés à des difficultés insurmontables.

S'il n'a pas été possible au Comité de prélever en faveur du camp de Pruszkow une certaine quantité de vivres sur les secours qui lui sont confiés par les Sociétés nationales de Croix-

Rouge pour être remis selon leurs indications à des bénéficiaires déterminés — prisonniers de guerre et internés civils — la Commission mixte de secours de la Croix-Rouge internationale a réussi à faire parvenir au camp de Pruszkow des secours achetés par elle avec les fonds mis à sa disposition par la Croix-Rouge polonaise. Douze wagons expédiés par ses soins avaient quitté la Suisse trois semaines plus tôt à destination de Cracovie, où ils avaient pu parvenir malgré d'énormes difficultés, grâce en particulier aux efforts de la Croix-Rouge allemande. La Commission mixte de secours fit aussitôt toutes les démarches voulues pour que le camp de Pruszkow pût bénéficier d'une partie tout au moins de ces secours. En même temps elle mettait en route de nouveaux envois. Dix wagons, contenant principalement des farines pour soupes, du sucre, du lait condensé, des produits lactés vitaminés et du biomalt, ont quitté Genève depuis le 1er octobre, et 206 caisses de médicaments, dont une partie avait été donnée par la Croix-Rouge américaine, ont été envoyées aux réfugiés polonais. Le Comité international ne relâche pas ses efforts.

La Croix-Rouge allemande informait bientôt le Comité international que le camp de Pruszkow était un *camp de transit* destiné à assurer l'évacuation de la population civile de Varsovie, dont les habitants, par milliers, cherchaient à fuir pour s'éloigner des combats qui y faisaient rage. D'après ses indications, le camp de Pruszkow pouvait contenir 50.000 personnes, et le chiffre de son effectif quotidien, au 10 septembre, était d'environ 30.000. Les personnes arrivées le matin en repartaient aussi rapidement que possible en direction du Wartheland. Les soins sanitaires, étant donné les circonstances, pouvaient être considérés comme satisfaisants. Les nouveaux arrivés étaient aussitôt soumis à un examen médical. Les prêtres et les religieuses étaient libérés.

Visite du camp de Pruszkow par un représentant du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge: 17 et 18 septembre 1944. Le 15 septembre, la délégation à Berlin du Comité international était avisée qu'un de ses membres était autorisé à visiter le camp de Pruszkow. Monsieur Paul Wyss, celui des collabora-

teurs du Comité qui fut chargé d'accomplir cette mission, arrivait le lendemain à 5 heures à Cracovie, en compagnie d'un représentant du ministère des Affaires étrangères, qui devait l'accompagner durant tout son voyage et qui accomplit sa mission avec tact et dévouement. Il y était reçu, à son arrivée, par un représentant du Reich et de la Croix-Rouge allemande. Le 17 septembre, dans l'après-midi, le délégué du Comité international arrivait à Pruszkow, qui est une petite ville industrielle de 24.000 habitants, située à 17 kilomètres du centre de Varsovie, au sud-ouest de la capitale. Le commandant du camp lui déclara aussitôt qu'il se mettait à sa disposition et que toutes facilités lui seraient données pour l'accomplissement de sa mission. Après que M. Wyss eut procédé à une première visite d'ensemble, il fut convenu que les Polonais dirigeant un certain nombre des services du camp — administration, service médical, service pharmaceutique, cuisines, magasin de vivres, envois de Croix-Rouge, etc. — seraient convoqués pour le lendemain matin.

Le jour suivant, de très bonne heure, le délégué du Comité eut l'occasion de se rendre compte de la façon dont avait lieu l'évacuation de Varsovie. Dans le décor tragique qu'offrent les maisons démolies et calcinées des faubourgs extrêmes de la capitale, c'est le flot ininterrompu des habitants qui quittent la ville, prenant la direction de Pruszkow. Spectacle lamentable que celui que présentent ces malheureux, affaiblis par les privations, aux vêtements déchirés, dont les visages creusés reflètent les dures épreuves subies durant les sept dernières semaines passées dans des caves, sans lumière et presque sans nourriture. Ils sont sortis de la ville à la faveur de l'obscurité, car l'exode est trop dangereux pendant la journée. Tout ce qu'ils ont pu sauver se trouve dans un sac, une voiture d'enfants, un panier... Dans cette interminable colonne, qui avance péniblement, il y a toutes les conditions et tous les âges, il y a des nouveau-nés et des vieillards, des malades, des infirmes, et des blessés. Le délégué du Comité international et les personnes qui l'accompagnent parviennent jusqu'à l'église qui sert de lieu de rassemblement et de poste de premier secours pour ceux qui cherchent à quitter la ville. Le médecin polonais,

épuisé par son travail de la nuit, dort à même le sol. Après un bref entretien avec le praticien, qui lui dit manquer de tout le matériel indispensable et lui confirme que, de 30.000 au début du soulèvement, le chiffre des passages quotidiens est tombé à moins de 4.000, le délégué du Comité international reprend le chemin de Pruszkow.

Arrivé au camp à 10 h. 30, M. Wyss y voit aussitôt, comme il avait été convenu, les Polonais y assumant des fonctions : en tout une vingtaine de personnes — qui, elles et leurs services, se dépensent sans compter — dont le médecin-chef — Mme Jadriga Kielbasinska — et ses collaborateurs, le chef du service pharmaceutique, le président — M. Maschnicki — et les membres du Comité central polonais d'assistance de Varsovie, un aumônier, etc. L'entretien a lieu dans un bureau du bâtiment où sont réunis les services de l'administration du camp, en présence du représentant de l'« Auswärtiges Amt ». Des déclarations qui sont faites à M. Wyss au cours de cette réunion par les représentants des Polonais, il ressort que le camp de transit de Pruszkow fonctionne depuis la nuit du 6 au 7 août dernier. Les civils polonais qui fuient la zone des combats sont rassemblés dans les faubourgs de Varsovie, puis dirigés sur ce camp. Dès leur arrivée, les personnes qui sont déclarées aptes au travail sont envoyées en Allemagne. Celles qui ne rentrent pas dans cette catégorie sont évacuées dans les différents arrondissements des districts de Varsovie et de Radon, où elles sont libres et trouvent asile tant bien que mal chez l'habitant. Ce sont les médecins polonais du camp qui dressent les listes des personnes inaptes au travail et les soumettent, avec leur diagnostic, au médecin-chef allemand, qui confirme ou infirme leurs décisions. Nous reviendrons plus loin sur le douloureux problème que pose la dispersion des familles.

En principe et dans la majorité des cas, les arrivants ne séjournent que quarante-huit heures au camp. Il est arrivé cependant, au moment de la plus grande affluence, que certains y soient demeurés jusqu'à une semaine, faute d'avoir pu être évacués par suite des moyens limités dont disposaient les services allemands.

D'après les contrôles allemands, 238.218 personnes sont

entrées au camp de Pruszkow du 6 août au 18 septembre. Sur ce nombre 128.371 ont été déclarées aptes au travail et transportées en Allemagne ; 109.847 ont été déclarées inaptes au travail et ont été libérées, après avoir été transportées dans leur nouvelle résidence. Au moment de la visite du délégué du Comité international, le camp enregistrait de 2 à 4.000 entrées par jour. Les entrées ont atteint au mois d'août, mais ceci exceptionnellement, le chiffre de 40.000.

Locaux. — Le camp est installé dans les grands ateliers de réparation de matériel roulant de la ville. Ce sont d'immenses bâtiments en maçonnerie de 200 mètres de long sur 100 de large environ, d'une hauteur de 12 à 15 mètres, recouverts de toits en tôle ou de grandes verrières. Il a été logé jusqu'à 8.000 personnes par halle. Les occupants ne disposent ni de lits, ni de planches, ni de couvertures, ni de paille, qu'il ne serait guère possible d'utiliser, étant donné le va-et-vient continuel et la quasi-impossibilité de nettoyer régulièrement les halles.

Le chauffage n'est pas installé, mais devait l'être prochainement, d'après les déclarations faites au délégué du Comité international par le commandant du camp.

Nourriture. — Les cuisines sont bien organisées. De grandes chaudières sont continuellement sous pression. Il existe une cuisine spéciale pour les enfants de un an à un an et demi. De grands locaux sont utilisés pour les réserves de légumes et de pain. D'après les précisions fournies au représentant du Comité international au cours de la réunion susmentionnée, trois repas par jour sont distribués. Les adultes reçoivent :

le matin : du café noir sans sucre, 250 gr. de pain de très bonne qualité ;
à midi : une soupe de légumes et de pommes de terre, sans graisse ni viande ;
le soir : la même nourriture que le matin, avec, en plus, une soupe de temps à autre ;

les enfants reçoivent :

le matin et le soir : une soupe au lait écrémé, deux fois par semaine, et une soupe de gruau d'avoine ou de produits similaires les autres jours ;

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

1. Faubourgs de Varsovie. Habitants quittant la ville pour se rendre au camp de Pruszkow [1].

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

2. Faubourgs de Varsovie. Habitants quittant la ville pour se rendre au camp de Pruszkow [1].

[1] Photographie rapportée par le délégué du Comité International.

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

3. Faubourgs de Varsovie. Une infirme est transportée hors de la ville en direction de Pruszkow [1].

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

4. Faubourgs de Varsovie. Poste de premiers secours et de ravitaillement [1].

[1] Photographie rapportée par le délégué du Comité international.

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

5. Vue partielle d'une halle [1].

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

6. Corvée de cuisine [1].

[1] Photographie prise par le délégué du Comité international.

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

7. Home de Milanowek [1].

VISITE DU CAMP DE PRUSZKOW
Septembre 1944

8. Home de Milanowek [1].

9. Enfant sous-alimenté et blessé,
soigné au home de Milanowek après sept semaines de privations à Varsovie [2].

[1-2] Photographies prises par le délégué du Comité international.

à midi : une soupe semblable à celle qui est mentionnée ci-dessus, mais plus épaisse.

Vêtements. — Tous ces réfugiés sont restés durant des semaines dans des caves et ont dû brusquement tout abandonner. Ils sont, en majorité, habillés de vêtements d'été en très mauvais état. Depuis six ans, ils n'ont rien pu se procurer, et leurs vêtements, déjà très usés, ont beaucoup souffert dans les caves de Varsovie ou au cours de leur exode. Ils sont pour la plupart dépourvus de tout — vêtements chauds, sous-vêtements, chaussures. Les enfants, qui sont tous en haillons, sont dans une situation encore plus triste. Ils ont froid. Il y a de tout petits enfants, qui sont venus au monde depuis que le drame a commencé. Ceux qui sont nés pendant l'exode ou dans le camp sont presque nus, ou enveloppés dans des chiffons. Or, il faisait déjà froid le soir et le matin dans cette région de la Pologne, où l'automne est précoce. Il faudrait pouvoir fournir d'urgence des effets, du linge de corps et des chaussures, même très usagés, pour les centaines de milliers de réfugiés qui ont quitté Varsovie — pour 400.000 personnes au moins. Il faudrait plus de 10.000 layettes.

Service médical. — Le travail des médecins attachés au camp de Pruszkow est des plus malaisé. Il leur faut accomplir des tâches multiples et difficiles : médecine interne sans les médicaments les plus indispensables, pansements de blessures graves sans le matériel nécessaire, chirurgie sans les instruments adéquats.

Seize médecins, répartis à raison de deux par halle, sont attachés au camp. Avec les évacués arrivent chaque jour de nouveaux médecins, qui sont envoyés immédiatement dans les hôpitaux et lazarets des environs. Les malades sont peu nombreux au camp même, car ils sont immédiatement évacués dans les quarante-cinq lazarets situés dans un rayon de trente kilomètres du camp. Les personnes atteintes de blessures légères et de maladies peu graves sont rassemblées dans une halle. Leur nombre est quotidiennement d'environ 300 à 400. Ils peuvent s'étendre sur des planches surélevées ou des nattes de raffia assez épaisses. Des soins médicaux sont donnés dans une

salle de pansement et de petite chirurgie se trouvant au camp même et dans 45 lazarets et hôpitaux, installés dans des écoles, des usines, etc., et comptant chacun de 100 à 400 malades. Il y a une pharmacie au camp même, mais elle est très démunie. Un laboratoire, bien installé à Grodzisk-Mazowiecki, ville située à 13 kilomètres de Pruszkow, travaille pour les 45 lazarets.

Le délégué du Comité international visita quatre lazarets installés à Milanowek, à 10 kilomètres au sud-ouest de Pruszkow, et fonctionnant sous la direction du médecin-chef du camp de Pruszkow, Mme Jadriga Kielbasinska, exemple admirable de courage et d'abnégation, qui les a organisés avec des moyens de fortune et fait preuve, de même que ses collaborateurs et collaboratrices, d'un inlassable dévouement. Un lazaret est affecté à la médecine interne, un autre à la chirurgie, le troisième aux maladies contagieuses. Ils sont installés, de façon très rudimentaire, dans des villas, et contiennent de 150 à 300 malades au total. Le quatrième est un home-hôpital d'enfants : grandes salles pourvues de petits lits blancs en fer, et qui contiennent, lors de la visite du délégué du Comité, 105 enfants de dix jours à un an, 207 enfants de un à cinq ans, 36 mères hospitalisées. Cet établissement, qui tient lieu aussi de maternité, avait particulièrement besoin de secours : les enfants les plus jeunes étaient dans un état de faiblesse extrême, provenant de la sous-alimentation et des semaines passées dans les caves de Varsovie. Il en meurt chaque jour, il est urgent de leur envoyer ce dont ils manquent.

Médicaments, matériel divers. — Soixante-et-une caisses de médicaments, dont la moitié avait été donnée par une grande firme suisse, sont arrivées de Genève le 15 septembre. Cet envoi a été d'un très grand secours, mais il était très loin d'être suffisant. Un stock précieux est resté dans les flammes à Varsovie. Les Allemands, déclare le médecin-chef polonais au délégué du Comité international, font leur possible pour fournir les médicaments indispensables. Les pharmacies, les hôpitaux et lazarets n'en sont pas moins terriblement démunis. Les bandes de pansements sont en papier ou en cellulose. Les instruments chirurgicaux des hôpitaux de Varsovie sont restés dans la ville

et sont détruits, les lazarets de fortune ne disposent que des instruments que les médecins ont réussi à sauver du désastre. Il n'y a presque pas de draps, point de couvertures, et les malades ont froid, surtout la nuit.

Le délégué du Comité international a rapporté la liste de ce qu'il serait le plus urgent d'envoyer. Cette liste est longue et éloquente.

Aumôniers du camp. — Il y a trois aumôniers catholiques au camp même, et il s'en trouve dix dans les divers lazarets des environs. L'aumônier-chef dit la messe tous les dimanches dans les halles. Au cours d'un entretien qu'il eut l'occasion d'avoir avec le représentant du Comité international, il se plut à reconnaître que l'attitude des Autorités allemandes du camp était, d'une façon générale, correcte. Les Polonais participant à la réunion dont il a été parlé plus haut s'exprimèrent dans le même sens.

Distribution des envois de Genève. — A l'arrivée du délégué du Comité international, un wagon expédié de Genève avait été distribué dans le camp même, ainsi que dans un certain nombre des lazarets dépendant du camp. Un deuxième wagon allait être distribué le lendemain. Ces deux wagons, partis de Genève le 2 septembre, sont arrivés à destination les 12 et 15 septembre respectivement. On peut imaginer la joie avec laquelle ils furent accueillis. Une dame polonaise avait été désignée pour tenir une comptabilité rigoureuse des vivres reçus ainsi que des vivres distribués. Le médecin allemand du camp remit les documents concernant ces deux wagons aux représentants du Comité central polonais d'assistance de Varsovie, en leur donnant toute latitude d'assurer la distribution des vivres et des médicaments comme ils le jugeaient bon. Le rapport sur la distribution des secours contenus dans le premier wagon fut remis au délégué du Comité international, qui inspecta le dépôt prévu pour les vivres reçus de Genève et put se convaincre que la tenue des registres et l'ordre y étaient parfaits. D'autres wagons sont arrivés depuis lors. Mais ce seraient des trains entiers qu'il faudrait pouvoir faire parvenir, car c'est à toute la population qui a dû quitter Varsovie qu'il faudrait venir en aide.

Croix-Rouge et civils polonais

C'est au Comité central polonais d'assistance de Cracovie que les envois de Genève sont maintenant adressés. Cet organisme, dont le président, M. Konstanty Tchorznicki, fait preuve du plus grand dévouement, est le centre de toute l'aide polonaise aux personnes en détresse dans le Gouvernement général, ainsi qu'à celles qui ont été transportées en Allemagne. Il est au courant des besoins et donc à même de procéder à une distribution judicieuse des secours, de diriger les envois, selon les circonstances, sur Pruszkow ou sur un autre point.

Familles dispersées. — Au début, des dizaines de milliers d'hommes et de femmes, transportés en Allemagne, ont été séparés des leurs qui, pas plus que les Autorités allemandes elles-mêmes, ne savent où ils se trouvent maintenant. On peut imaginer l'effet extrêmement démoralisant que produisent ces séparations. Actuellement, l'affluence étant moins grande et les services allemands étant mieux organisés, il est possible de savoir dans quelle région de l'Allemagne se trouvent les personnes qui y sont envoyées. Le Comité central polonais d'assistance de Cracovie reçoit chaque jour des centaines de demandes de nouvelles. Il a créé un service de recherches, dont le travail est rendu très difficile par le manque de matériel et l'affluence toujours plus grande des demandes. Le Comité international s'efforcera d'apporter son aide à ce service si important.

Le délégué du Comité international estima nécessaire, avant de regagner Berlin, de s'entretenir avec les Autorités allemandes compétentes des si importants problèmes que pose la séparation des familles. L'assurance lui fut fournie que des ordres formels avaient été donnés pour que les familles dont les membres sont aptes au travail dans une proportion d'au moins 50% ne soient pas séparées, que ces ordres seraient confirmés, et qu'il serait fait le nécessaire pour que le côté humain de cette question ne fût pas perdu de vue.

Signalons que le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge a obtenu l'autorisation d'envoyer deux de ses délégués dans la Warthegau pour y visiter les camps de réfugiés polonais et que ses représentants s'acquitteront très prochainement de cette mission.

Croix-Rouge et civils polonais

Le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge vient de recevoir un appel du Comité central polonais d'assistance de Cracovie. Ce nouvel appel, qui est appuyé par les Autorités du Gouvernement général, par la Croix-Rouge allemande et par toutes les instances polonaises, souligne que la situation dans laquelle se trouvent 300.000 nouvelles personnes environ évacuées de Varsovie, et qui sont dénuées de tout, met en grand danger non seulement leur santé, mais leur vie, et qu'elles ont un besoin particulièrement urgent, vu la saison avancée, de couvertures, de vêtements, de linge, de chaussures et de médicaments, que les Autorités allemandes ne sont à même de leur fournir que dans une faible mesure.

Il convient d'indiquer que la Croix-Rouge suédoise a expédié deux premiers wagons de secours, et que les Croix-Rouges américaine, anglaise et canadienne ont donné des preuves de l'intérêt agissant qu'elles portent à cette action.

Toutefois, et bien que le sort tragique de Varsovie ait grandement préoccupé l'opinion publique mondiale, l'aide fournie jusqu'ici est extrêmement insuffisante, car c'est toute la population d'une capitale d'un million d'habitants qu'il s'agit de secourir. Pour que sa détresse pût être soulagée de façon efficace, il faudrait des contributions nombreuses — en nature ou en argent. Elles vaudraient aux donateurs la profonde gratitude d'une nation tragiquement éprouvée.

OCT 19 [redacted]

Dear Mr. Peter:

Thank you for your letter of October 12, 1944, (S-4/0), enclosing a copy of a report made by one of your delegates after a visit to Jasenovac, Stara Gradiska and Gredjani Salas.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Marc Peter,
Delegate,
International Committee of
the Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Ave., N.W.,
Washington 9, D. C.

RBHutchison:agr 10-17-44

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

In replying, refer to (S-4/0)

October 12th, 1944.

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

Dear Mr. Pehle,

We have been requested by our Geneva Offices to forward to you a copy of a report made by one of our delegates after the visit of the following camps: Jasenovac, Stara Gradiska and Gredjani Salas. This report is attached herewith for your attention and information and we would ask you to note that it is of a confidential nature.

The International Committee of the Red Cross would be most happy to receive whatever clothings you could procure for distribution to this category of internees.

Very truly yours,

Marc Peter

MARC PETER,
Delegate.

Encl. 1
sgc.

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Le 26 août, 1944.

R E S U M E

du

Rapport Schmidlin No. 762, du 2.8.44.

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CONCERNE: visite des camps de Jasenovac, Stara Gradiska et Gredjani Salas.

Parti de Zagreb le 13 juillet, M. Schmidlin, accompagné du Directeur général du Département de la Sûreté publique, du Secrétaire d'Etat de l'Intérieur et du Comité pour les camps de travail prés le Département de l'Intérieur, est arrivé le même jour a Jasenovac. Dès le début, M. Schmidlin remarque qu'il lui est interdit de s'entretenir avec les internés ou de prendre des photographies dans les camps visités. Le 14 juillet la visite a commencé par des bâtiments qui se trouvent hors du camp soit, un hôpital destiné aux Ustachis. Des médecins, ainsi que le personnel sanitaire de cet établissement, sont recrutés uniquement parmi les internés (juifs et chrétiens). L'hôpital semble bien organisé et dispose de tout le matériel sanitaire nécessaire, ainsi que d'une pharmacie et d'un laboratoire d'analyses. La pharmacie sert en même temps pour l'hôpital, le corps de garde des camps de Stara Gradiska et de Jasenovac et les camps eux-mêmes.

La région de Jasenovac se trouve située à la frontière même du champ d'activité des partisans.

Le 15 juillet notre délégué a pu visiter, en passant, le camp de Jablanac qui se trouve entre Jasenovac et Stara Gradiska. Le camp, situé sur la rive droite et au bord même de la Sava, se compose de quelques constructions assez primitives en briques. Les internés travaillent aux champs sous surveillance permanente d'Ustachis; les hommes et les femmes sont strictement séparés, tant pour le travail que pour le logement à l'intérieur du camp. M. Schmidlin a pu voir environ 140 internés qui semblent de classes sociales très différentes et qui, selon les apparences, se portent assez bien. Les vêtements (lambeaux) et les chaussures (sandales avec semelles de bois) laisent beaucoup à désirer. A la cuisine du camp on était en train de préparer de la polenta.

Dans le camp même l'ordre règne. Les couchettes sont en bois et sans matelas. Les internés ont des couvertures et des tapis pour se préserver du froid. Il y aurait beaucoup de vermine. L'ensemble du camp est très primitif.

Le même jour (15 juillet) M. Schmidlin visite le camp de Stara Gradiska. Ce camp est installé dans une ancienne forteresse utilisée jusqu'en 1941 comme prison. Le tout est entouré d'un mur ayant des tourelles pour les surveillants.

Dans ce camp se trouvent internés des hommes, des femmes et des enfants, des Juifs et des Chrétiens (pravoslaves) et même quelques étrangers. Femmes et hommes sont strictement séparés. Ce camp contient différents ateliers d'artisans où 190 à 220 hommes (Juifs et Chrétiens) sont occupés. Ces artisans ont bonne mine, sont mieux vêtus et mieux chaussés que les autres internés. Le camp contient en outre un moulin et une boulangerie, une buanderie, une fabrique d'eau gazeuze etc. Environ 45 hommes sont occupés dans ces établissements; mêmes constations que ci-dessus quant aux vêtements et chaussures des internés.

Les dortoirs, quoique primitifs, ont été trouvés en bon ordre. Les internés disposent de couvertures, mais les matelas manquent. A la cuisine on était en train de cuire de la polenta. Dans un bâtiment séparé se trouvent d'anciennes cellules individuelles qui sont attribuées chacune à 4 internés. Il y a de l'eau dans le camp (et même dans les cellules, ainsi que dans les dortoirs) et les installations d'hygiène sont satisfaisantes.

Le camp contient un hôpital. Le jour de la visite, il n'y avait pas d'internés malades; seuls quelques Ustachis se trouvaient hospitalisés. Les médecins et le personnel sanitaire sont recrutés parmi les Juifs et les chrétiens internés. L'état de santé des internés est satisfaisant.

La partie réservée aux femmes contient de même différents ateliers (couture, tissage, etc.). Beaucoup de femmes travaillent aux champs. Les dortoirs sont identiques à ceux des hommes. Les femmes ont bonne mine et sont mieux vêtues que les hommes. L'ordre règne dans le camp. Les femmes avec enfants ont un dortoir spécial. Une infirmirie spéciale (deux médecins internés) fonctionne dans cette partie du camp. Le jour de la visite environ 30 femmes étaient en traitement. Cette infirmerie, quoique primitive, fait une bonne impression. M. Schmidlin signale un manque prononcé d'ouate. Il a promis d'en faire parvenir. Au point de vue des produits pharmaceutiques, le camp de Stara Gradiska dépend de Jasenovac. Une ambulance dentaire fonctionne pour les deux camps.

Comme il est déjà mentionné plus haut, la plupart des internés, hommes et femmes, sont occupés aux travaux des champs en dehors du camp. Les heures de travail sont de 7-12 et de 14-19 h. Des vêtements des internés laissent beaucoup à désirer. Une école fréquentée par 14 enfants fonctionne dans le camp.

Le 16 juillet, M. Schmidlin a assisté à la messe dans la chapelle du camp. Le même jour, il a assisté à une représentation théatrale, un concert et un match de football. Toutes ces manifestations sont organisées et exécutées par les intéressés.

Le même jour notre délégué a visité une ferme (GREDJANI Salas) où environ 95 internés (Juifs et Chrétiens) sont employés aux travaux des champs. L'état général des internés a été trouvé satisfaisant tandis que leurs vêtements sont insuffisants. A la cuisine on préparait de la polenta et des légumes.

Le 17 juillet notre délégué a pu visiter le camp de Jasenovac. Constructions en brique entourés de trois côtés d'une muraille et du 4ième par la rivière Savas.

A l'intérieur du camp il y a une installation pour la fabrication des briques ainsi qu'une fabrique de chaînes. Environ 70 à 80 internés (surtout des Juifs) sont occupés dans ces ateliers. Ils ont bonne mine, mais sont trés mal vêtus. Une scierie et un atelier de menuiserie fonctionnant également dans ce camp. Un moulin et une boulangerie se trouvent à l'intérieur du camp. Il y a même du bétail et une fromagerie dont s'occupent 3 internés.

Les dortoirs sont installés dans des baraques en bois. Les couchettes sont en bois, doubles, sans matelas, mais partout des couvertures en quantité suffisante. L'ordre règne partout. Chaque baraque abrite environ 100 internés.

L'infirmerie est placée dans deux baraques identiques. Les médecins sont tous des internés (Juifs et Chrétiens). Le jour de la visite environ 95 personnes étaient hospitalisés. Les maladies les plus fréquentes sont la T.B.C., le rhumatisme et la malaria. Les produits pharmaceutiques sont fournis par la pharmacie de l'hôpital des Ustachis. Il y a une installation de désinfection qui fonctionne à intervalles réguliers. Le manque de matelas est aigu. Les toilettes sont satisfaisantes.

La partie du camp réservée aux femmes est séparée par une palissade. Les dortoirs sont installés dans deux baraques identiques à celles décrites plus haut. L'ordre règne partout. Les femmes sont surtout occupées aux travaux des champs.

Le camp de Jasenovac comprend une fabrique de maroquinerie dans laquelle travaillent seulement des internés. Il y a en outre une industrie de brosses. Environ 120 hommes, surtout des Juifs, travaillent dans ces fabriques. Ces hommes semblent se porter trés bien. Les mêmes heures de travail qu'à Stara-Gradiska sont obligatoires.

Les internés de Jasenovac portent des brassards distinctifs (jaunes - Juifs; bleu - catholiques; et blanc - pravoslaces). Tous les hommes sont tondus.

La nourriture est insuffisante, ce qui fait que les internés attendent toujours impatiemment les colis (ils en recoivent souvent jusqu'à 600 par jour.)

En conclusion, les constatations générales sont satisfaisantes, abstraction faite de la question vêtements, et des matelas. Il faudrait aussi prévoir des envois de vivres et de médicaments (quoique selon M. Schmidlin l'envoi américain de produits pharmaceutiques pourrait suffir pour le moment.)

- - - - - - - - - - - -

copie, sgc.

OCT 19 1944

Dear Mr. Peter:

Thank you for your letter of October 13, 1944, (S/2/4), enclosing a report showing the relief activities of the Joint Relief Committee of the International Red Cross in favor of Jewish deportees, refugees, and internees in Europe.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Marc Peter,
Delegate,
International Committee of
the Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,
Washington 9, D. C.

RBHutchisonlagr 10-18-44

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

October 13th, 1944. In replying, refer to (S/2/4)

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

Dear Mr. Pehle,

Our Geneva Headquarters have requested us to transmit to you for attention and information, the attached report showing the relief activities of the Joint Relief Committee of the International Red Cross in favour of Jewish deportees, refugees and internees throughout Europe.

We feel sure that this document will prove of the greatest interest to yourself and the members of your organization.

Sincerely yours,

Marc Peter

MARC PETER,
Delegate.

encl. 1
sgc.

Law enclosure etc
Exhibits. International
Red Cross

OCT 6 1944

Dear Mr. Peter:

Thank you for your letters of September 29 and September 30, 1944 (your references S/4/3 and S/2/h), enclosing copies of communications concerning the camp at Prusskow.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle,
Executive Director.

Mr. Mare Peter,
Delegate in the United States
of the International Committee
of the Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,
Washington, 9, D. C.

Copy to Lesser

LSLesser:tmh 10-5-44 L.S.L.

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

Ref. S/2/4

September 30, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I am herewith sending you the continuation of the cable which I sent you on September 29th, concerning the visit of Camp Pruszkow by a Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Very truly yours,

Marc Peter

MARC PETER
Delegate in the United States of the
International Committee of the
Red Cross

MP/SGS
1 copy cable

COPY OF INCOMING CABLEGRAM:

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

DELEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Ref. S/2/h
S/4/j

Translation

Date received: September 30, 1944

Cablegram received from: Intercroixrouge
Geneve, Suisse

1227 FOLLOWING OUR E9207 BESIDE REPORT OUR DELEGATE GERMAN RED CROSS COMMUNICATES THE FOLLOWING

MEDICAL CARE PRUSZKOW GOOD SPECIAL FACILITIES FOR CONTAGIOUS SICK 7 MILITARY PHYSICIANS PLUS PHYSICIANS AND POLISH NURSES GYNOCOLOGISTS AT CAMP STOP NEW ARRIVALS ARE EXAMINED BY PHYSICIANS STOP PRIESTS AND NUNS LIBERATED STOP PERSONNES ARRIVING IN THE MORNING AT CAMP LEAVE IN THE EVENING FOR THE DIRECTION OF WARTHEGAU

INTERCROIXROUGE E9242

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave., Washington 9, D. C.

September 29, 1944

In replying, refer to (S/4/J)

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I am sending you herewith the translation of a cable we received today about the visit of Camp Pruszkow by a Delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Very truly yours,

Marc Peter

Marc Peter
Delegate

MP:MJH
Enclosure

COPY OF INCOMING CABLEGRAM:

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

DELEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Réf. S/4/j
S/2/h

Date received: September 29, 1944

Cablegram received from: Intercroixrouge
Genève, Suisse

1223 FOLLOWING OUR E9063 CICR DELEGATE HAS RETURNED FROM PRUSZKOW ANNOUNCES ARRIVAL TWO CARS INTACT 61 MEDICAL PACKAGES STOP URGENTLY REQUESTS FOOD AND DRUGS WHICH COMMIXTE (MIXED MEDICAL COMMISSION) IS TRYING TO SEND STOP DISTRIBUTION PARTLY COMPLETED IN PRESENCE DELEGATE STOP 17/9/44 FOUR THOUSAND PEOPLE AT PRUSZKOW CAMP IN TRANSIT 243,000 PEOPLE HAVE PASSED ON WAY TO CAMPS WHICH EMPLACEMENT WE TO DATE IGNORE BUT WHICH WE HAVE REQUESTED TO VISIT STOP RELIEF SPECIALLY DISTRIBUTED TO 45 LAZARETS AROUND PRUSZKOW STOP DELEGATE WILL BE ABLE RETURN ON RECEPTION NEW SHIPMENTS

INTERCROIXROUGE E9207

SEP 22 1944

Dear Mr. Peter:

Thank you for your memorandum of September 19, 1944 (your 2/4/j) with reference to the authorization received for an International Red Cross Delegate to visit Camp Prushkow near Warsaw. I would appreciate it very much if you would keep me advised of developments in connection therewith.

Very truly yours,

[signature] J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle,
Executive Director.

Mr. Mare Peter,
Delegate in the United States,
International Committee of the Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Copy to Lesser

LSLesser:tmh 9-21-44 L. S. L.

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

September 19, 1944

Réf. S/4/J

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. J. W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D. C.

For your information I am herewith enclosing a copy of a cable we have received from the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva concerning

no. 1205, visit of ICRC Delegate to Camp Pruszkow, near Warszaw.

Marcel Pictet

THE DELEGATE IN THE UNITED STATES
of the
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

COPY OF INCOMING CABLEGRAM:

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

DELEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Réf-. S/4/1

Date received: le 18 septembre, 1944

Cablegram received from: Interoroixrouge
Genève, Suisse

1205 HAVING OBTAINED NECESSARY AUTHORISATIONS HAVE INSTRUCTED MEMBER OUR DELEGATION BERLIN TRAVEL IMMEDIATELY TO TRANSITCAMP PRUSZKOW STOP SHALL KEEP YOU INFORMED

INTERCROIXROUGE E9063

MS-489

PLAIN

Bern

Dated September 22, 1944

Rec'd 5:50 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

6299, Twenty-second

Sequence Legation's 5779, second.

Berlin DNB twenty-first makes following propaganda statement regarding alleged conditions Pruszkow Camp for Warsaw refugees: Contrary reports spread by Anglo-Americans Polish Relief Committee states no difficulties are encountered in extending medical and spiritual assistance to inmates Pruszkow camp where 250,000 Polish men, women and children have been housed since beginning revolt in Warsaw. Camp was visited September 17-18 by Intercross representative Wyss who was acquainted by Chief Polish Relief Committee and doctors, nurses and auxiliary personnel with feeding and medical arrangements and inspected kitchen lodging and welfare installations Wyss likewise investigated individual refugees cases. Statement appears designed to forestall possible Wyss report.

HARRISON

IPS

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akzin, Cohn, Drury, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Hannon, Marks, McCormack, Pehle, Files

AUG 30 1944

Dear Mr. Ryan:

I wish to thank you for your letter of August 28, with which you enclosed a copy of a letter received from a member of the American Red Cross staff in Moscow. Your interest in forwarding this report to us is greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Philip E. Ryan,
Director of Civilian Relief,
Insular and Foreign Operations,
National Headquarters,
American Red Cross,
Washington, D. C.

FH:jth 8/29/44

Copies sent to:

Mr. Abrahamson
Mr. DuBois
Mr. Friedman
Miss Hodel
Mr. Lasser
Mr. Mann
Mr. Pehle

AMERICAN RED CROSS

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON, D. C.

August 26, 1944

Mr. J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Secretary
War Refugee Board
Washington 25, D. C.

My dear Mr. Pehle:

For the information of the War Refugee Board, I am attaching copy of a letter recently received from a member of our American Red Cross staff in Moscow, about Jewish refugees in the U.S.S.R.

Sincerely yours,

Philip E. Ryan
Director of Civilian Relief
Insular and Foreign Operations

Encl.

AMERICAN RED CROSS
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON 13, D. C.

Manifest #30
Letter #1

FORM 767

16 Vesnin Ulitsa
MOSCOW, USSR

July 17, 1944

Re: Headquarters Letter #318
Jewish refugees in the
U.S.S.R.

Mr. G. Roberts More
Assistant Director, Civilian Relief
Insular and Foreign Operations
American Red Cross
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bob:

Your clearly defined statement concerning Dr. Tartakower's discussion with you on Jewish refugees in the U.S.S.R. led us to review the problem carefully. Our effort did not produce satisfactory results and we cabled you consequently (RU-205) that it would be useless to forward the long lists from the World Jewish Congress.

With respect to the lists of general refugees, we have pursued the subject from every angle, particularly in connection with the Lithuanians and will be fortunate if replies are forthcoming even on the small list of 200 refugees with known addresses. The longer Lithuanian list is simply beyond the scope of the Soviet Red Cross and they have asked us definitely to cancel the request for a report. Their attitude is the same toward the prospective list of Jewish refugees about whom Dr. Tartakower so understandable is concerned. Theoretically, inquiry service is performed by the Alliance, but practically, the facilities of the organization are almost entirely absorbed in other more pressing responsibilities. The Australian Legation, acting for the Poles, is occasionally successful in obtaining information about nonpolitical Polish individuals and there might be some point in submitting inquiries apertaining to this group.

In regard to Hungarian and other Jews forcibly assigned to Nazi Labor Battalions, the Soviet Red Cross quite readily understands the special situation of these people but does not see a way to find them and to differentiate between the individuals deserving of recognition and

those who would still be of a questionable association, from the Soviet point of view. We had submitted this problem prior to the arrival of your letter #318 in the interests of two Hungarian Jews in a like predicament and, although no written statement of policy has been offered, there has been a verbal declination.

We re sincerely sorry that we cannot be more encouraging but this is how the matter st nds.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Elliott M. Shirk

Elliott M. Shirk
Assistant Director
American Red Cross
In The USSR

2 Wx Ref BS - Parks

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington

TO: American Legation, Bern

DATE: August 21, 1944

NUMBER: 2873

CONTROL COPY

[redacted]

FOLLOWING FOR MCCLELLAND.

Please transmit the following message to Dr. Gerhard Riegner, 37 Quai Wilson, Geneva:

QUOTE Approached by Belgian Legation, IGRC stated its inability to again ask Germans for authorization to visit Jewish camps in Belgium. IGRC fears that a new request would endanger sending foodstuffs these camps.

It is our conviction that by stressing repeatedly the right interned Jews be treated civilian internees by analogy Geneva Convention, the Red Cross could only improve their situation. Energetic action Red Cross Hungarian Jews proves authority this Committee could still achieve much, especially at this stage of the war. Besides, wonder whether foodstuffs really reach Jewish internees Belgian camps. Please intervene, wire. World Jewish Congress. A. Leon Kubowitzki. UNQUOTE

THIS IS WRB TABLE TO MEMO NO. 131

HULL

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

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON AND McCLELLAND, BERN, SWITZERLAND

Please transmit the following message to Dr. Gerhard Riegner, 37 Quai Wilson, Geneva:

QUOTE Approached by Belgian Legation, ICRC stated its inability to again ask Germans for authorization to visit Jewish camps in Belgium. ICRC fears that a new request would endanger sending foodstuffs these camps.

It is our conviction that by stressing repeatedly the right interned Jews be treated civilian internees by analogy Geneva Convention, the Red Cross could only improve their situation. Energetic action Red Cross Hungarian Jews proves authority this Committee could still achieve much, especially at this stage of the war. Besides, wonder whether foodstuffs really reach Jewish internees Belgian camps. Please intervene, wire. World Jewish Congress. A. Leon Kubowitzki. UNQUOTE

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 131

9:30 a.m.
August 18, 1944

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

Ba, L.S.L.

BAkzin:ml 8/16/44

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRES JUIF MONDIAL • CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

1834 BROADWAY

NEW YORK, 23, N. Y.

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

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

August 9, 1944

In reply refer
to No. 210

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

May I ask you to kindly forward the following message to Dr. Riegner, our Geneva representative, through the facilities of the State Department:

"To: Dr. Gerhard Riegner, 37 Quai Wilson, Geneva
From: Dr. A. Leon Kubowitzki, World Jewish Congress, 1834 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

Quote

Approached by Belgian Legation, ICRC stated its inability to again ask Germans for authorization to visit Jewish camps in Belgium. ICRC fears that a new request would endanger sending foodstuffs these camps.

It is our conviction that by stressing repeatedly the right interned Jews be treated civilian internees by analogy Geneva Convention, the Red Cross could only improve their situation. Energetic action Red Cross Hungarian Jews proves authority this Committee could still achieve much, especially at this stage of the war. Besides, wonder whether foodstuffs really reach Jewish internees Belgian camps. Please intervene, wire."

World Jewish Congress, A. Leon Kubowitzki
Unquote

Sincerely yours,

A. Leon Kubowitzki, Head
Rescue Department

ALK:bm

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

CONGRES JUIF MONDIAL • CONGRESO JUDIO MUNDIAL

1834 BROADWAY

NEW YORK, 23, N. Y.

LONDON
55 New Cavendish St., W 1

GENEVA
37 Quai Wilson

BUENOS AIRES
Corrientes 1979

JERUSALEM
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MONTREAL
1121 St. Catherine St. W

MEXICO CITY
Sonora 174-4

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

Similar cable has been sent for W/C — see 131 to Bern BG.

August 17, 1944

In reply refer to: No. 215

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

May I ask you to be kind enough to forward to Dr. Riegner of our Geneva Office the following cable through the facilities of the State Department:

"To: Gerhart Riegner, Geneva. From: Dr. Kubowitzki, New York.

Belgian Legation Bern requested ICRC visit Jewish camps in Belgium. ICRC refused ask Germans for such authorization fearing that such demand would endanger their other activities. On account recent affirmation prestige ICRC request you press for reconsideration this viewpoint. ICRC should be reminded constantly your arguments July 13 validity of which not impaired by Hungarian action."

Thanking you for giving this matter your attention, I remain

Sincerely yours

A. Leon Kubowitzki, Head
Rescue Department

ALK:erl

JUN 27 1944

Dear Mr. Peter:

Thank you for your letter of June 21, 1944, (S/B/h), with which you transmitted a copy of a letter dated May 12, 1944, from the International Red Cross to the Minister of the United States in Berne.

Sincerely yours,

[Signed] J. W. Pehle
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Marc Peter,
Delegate of the International
Committee of the Red Cross,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.,
Washington 9, D. C.

RBT RH REHutchisonlagr 6-26-44

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

Ref: S/2/h

June 21, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

The International Committee of the Red Cross recently sent me two copies of a letter which they addressed to the Minister of the United States in Berne on May 12, 1944, in answer to a communication from the War Refugee Board.

As I understand that you have not yet received a copy of this letter, I am sending you one enclosed. The International Committee has sent, together with the above-mentioned copies, a note to this Delegation reminding me of certain considerations which must be taken into account with regard to relief for Jewish people in Germany and German-occupied territories.

The International Committee observes that its position cannot be compared with that of a government acting as a Protecting Power with a definite mandate from a belligerent nation. The International Committee's activities can be pursued only when admitted by the belligerent governments; and in trying to go beyond these limits, the Committee would run the risk of impairing all possibilities of fulfilling its humanitarian task.

Realities must be faced, and the policies of the German authorities toward the Jewish population must be taken into consideration.

The answer of the International Committee, however, is not merely negative; it is also constructive when it mentions the only way in which in its opinion and experience relief can, through their intervention, be brought to the Jews.

In some of the letters, of which I have forwarded you copies, the Committee mentioned a relief program which it has elaborated in favor of certain groups of civilians, relief which must not be limited to Jews. The Committee will be glad to collaborate with the Board in the execution of this program, and I am ready to discuss it with you whenever it is convenient.

Sincerely yours,

Marc Peter

Marc Peter
Delegate

MP:MJH
Enclosure

G.59/7 G.59/4
JRS/JCW/HL
Copie GB

May 12th, 1944.

DELEGATION IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

My dear Mr. Minister,

I beg to thank you sincerely for your kind letter of 2 May 1944, in which you reproduce a message from the War Refugee Board, requesting the International Committee of the Red Cross to approach certain Governments with a view to obtaining for Jews and other persons interned treatment comparable with that which is accorded to civilian internees to whom the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war is applied by analogy, or, failing such treatment, that such persons be placed on an equal footing with civilian internees as regards permission to receive relief.

We desire, in the first place, to point out that steps of this nature by the International Committee would go far beyond the limits of their traditional capacity and that the Governments to whom such a request might be addressed would not fail to view this proposal from that particular angle.

In the provisions of the International agreements the International Committee have only a slender basis upon which to found their humanitarian activities. The latter are, therefore, dependent upon the good will of belligerent States, and can only take practical shape in so far as they are accepted or solicited by the Governments concerned.

Consequently, the International Committee of the Red Cross might lay themselves open to the objection that they were going beyond the limits of their competences, and

His Excellency
Mr. Leland Harrison
American Minister
Legation of the United States
of America,
BERN

trespassing upon the internal concerns of a State, should they attempt to act on behalf of certain categories of persons whom that State considered to be subject exclusively to its domestic legislation.

The exceptional position of the International Committee of the Red Cross as neutral intermediary between belligerent countries precludes their seeking other solutions than those which offer practical hope of realisation, through appropriate action in quarters where the best results may be expected.

The proposal contained in point (1) of the message from the War Refugee Board has, we may add, been submitted on several occasions to the International Committee of the Red Cross by the World Jewish Congress. On each occasion, the International Committee was obliged to answer that the numerous endeavours they had made on behalf of the Jews had invariably met with a negative answer with the exception of certain concessions with regard to relief measures.

Under these circumstances, we must admit that application by our Committee to the German authorities in this matter would not only have no prospect of success, but might even, in the eyes of these authorities, appear -- quite unjustifiably -- dictated by political rather than by humanitarian motives.

We deeply regret having to confine ourselves to purely relief activities on behalf of persons who do not enjoy the protection of the Convention applicable to prisoners of war and civilian internees. This circumstance is not due to absence of endeavours of all kinds by the Committee on behalf of such persons -- irrespective of race -- with a view to their assimilation with civilian internees, by reason of their enemy nationality. Unfortunately, not one of these approaches has been successful.

As regards point (2), the International Committee is compelled, in view of experiences in this field, to admit likewise the fact that such application would be considered incompatible with the domestic legislation of the detaining Power, and moreover would constitute serious menace not only to the general activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross on behalf of prisoners of war and civilian internees, but also endanger the limited possibilities which we enjoy of assisting the few groups of persons who are not protected, either directly or by analogy, by international Conventions. The International Committee must, it will be remembered, take extreme care that a province, in which the belligerents have accepted our ministrations, should not be closed to future action.

The same observation applies to the proposal contained in the last paragraph of the message from the War Refugee Board "to rescue from the occupied areas Jews and other persons who are victims of persecution". Any such attempt by the International Committee of the Red Cross would at once have the most unfortunate consequences for their entire work -- an eventuality which they cannot conscientiously envisage.

Since repeated and conclusive experience in this field leads us to suppose that any steps of this kind would not only be altogether fruitless, but might even do more harm than good, the International Committee must, to their regret, abide by the proposals they have already submitted to the authorities in Washington and to the Intergovernmental Committee in London. After careful consideration of the problem and through exploration of all avenues in other fields of action, the International Committee are, in other words, compelled to confine themselves strictly to relief work, within the limits which circumstances prescribe.

The scheme for the relief of civilian war victims, irrespective of race and religion, with which the War Refugee Board is familiar, is to our mind, and for the present, the only province in which action by the International Committee can produce useful results. Moreover, the scope of such action can be widened, in obedience to conditions prevailing, only in so far as publicity of any kind is avoided. In this connection, we are happy to stress the fact that the International Committee have achieved encouraging results in the field of relief work. It was largely due to the kind support given to our suggestions by the War Refugee Board a short time ago, that relief activities on behalf of Jews in certain countries could be undertaken. This work is worth being pursued.

As regards the other countries mentioned in the message of the War Refugee Board, and in which the International Committee are also engaged actively, here too we must confine ourselves to questions of purely material relief and we shall be pleased to receive, as soon as possible, any assistance the War Refugee Board is able to give us, with a view to our taking practical action along the lines we have submitted to their consideration on behalf of civilian war victims without distinction of race or creed.

In certain countries of South-Eastern Europe, and as far as circumstances allowed, the International Committee have, nevertheless, been instrumental in facilitating Jewish emigration to Palestine. On 5 May, 1944, we forwarded to the United States Legation at Bern a note (G.59/5) on the work done during the preceding months. In

this respect also -- the question concerns primarily safe-conducts -- the degree of responsibility we are in a position to assume, depends not upon ourselves, but on the extent to which circumstances and the Governments interested permit.

The International Committee of the Red Cross would be extremely grateful to you, my dear Mr. Minister, if you would inform the War Refugee Board of the above reply, and request them to consider this communication as confidential, since any publicity given to these matters can be prejudicial to the same persons whom we are endeavouring to assist.

I remain, my dear Mr. Minister,

yours sincerely,

Max HUBER
President of the International
Committee of the Red Cross.

0 0 5 0

3 War Refugee Board (Jews)

CONTROL COPY

No. 8203

Bern, May 17, 1944.

Subject: International Committee of the Red Cross: Reply to Request by the War Refugee Board in the Matter of Treatment of Jews and Other Persons Detained, Interned or Otherwise Confined in Germany and its Satellite Countries.

[redacted]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of a letter from the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross dated May 12, 1944 on the above-indicated subject, which is in reply to my communication of May 2, 1944 to President Huber.

In my letter of May 2 I transmitted to President Huber the message from the War Refugee Board which was conveyed to me by the Department in its telegram No. 1498 of April 29, 1944. This present despatch is confirmatory, the reply of the International Committee having previously been transmitted to the Department in my telegrams Nos. 3144 and 3147 dated May 17, 1944.

Respectfully yours,

Leland Harrison.

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

Enclosure:

Copy of letter from International Committee of the Red Cross, May 12, 1944.

File No. 840.1
JKH/mjb
In triplicate to Department.

A true copy of the signed original

(Enclosure to Despatch No. 8203 dated May 17 1944 from American Legation, Bern)

C O P Y

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
Agence Centrale des Prisonniers de Guerre

Rappeler dans la réponse:
G.59/7 G.59/4

Genève, May 12th, 1944
Palais du Conseil-Général

My dear Mr. Minister:

I beg to thank you sincerely for your kind letter of 2 May 1944, in which you reproduce a message from the War Refugee Board, requesting the International Committee of the Red Cross to approach certain Governments with a view to obtaining for Jews and other persons interned treatment comparable with that which is accorded to civilian internees to whom the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war is applied by analogy, or, failing such treatment, that such persons be placed on an equal footing with civilian internees as regards permission to receive relief.

We desire, in the first place, to point out that steps of this nature by the International Committee would go far beyond the limits of their traditional capacity and that the Governments to whom such a request might be addressed would not fail to view this proposal from that particular angle.

In the provisions of the International agreements the International Committee have only a slender basis upon which to found their humanitarian activities. The latter are, therefore, dependent upon the good will of belligerent States, and can only take practical shape in so far as they are accepted or solicited by the Governments concerned.

Consequently, the International Committee of the Red Cross might lay themselves open to the objection that they were going beyond the limits of their competences, and trespassing upon the internal concerns of a State, should they attempt to act on behalf of certain categories of persons whom that State considered to be subject exclusively to its domestic legislation.

The exceptional position of the International Committee of the Red Cross as neutral intermediary between belligerent countries precludes their seeking other solutions than those which offer practical hope of realization, through appropriate action in quarters where the best results may be expected.

The proposal contained in point (1) of the message from the War Refugee Board has, we may add, been submitted on

several

His Excellency
Mr. Leland Harrison,
American Minister,
Legation of the United States of America,
Bern.

several occasions to the International Committee of the Red Cross by the World Jewish Congress. On each occasion, the International Committee was obliged to answer that the numerous endeavours they had made on behalf of the Jews had invariably met with a negative answer, with the exception of certain concessions with regard to relief measures.

Under these circumstances, we must admit that application by our Committee to the German authorities in this matter would not only have no prospect of success, but might even, in the eyes of these authorities, appear--quite unjustifiably--dictated by political rather than by humanitarian motives.

We deeply regret having to confine ourselves to purely relief activities on behalf of persons who do not enjoy the protection of the Convention applicable to prisoners of war and civilian internees. This circumstance is not due to absence of endeavours of all kinds by the Committee on behalf of such persons--irrespective of race--with a view to their assimilation with civilian internees, by reason of their enemy nationality. Unfortunately, not one of these approaches has been successful.

As regards point (2), the International Committee is compelled, in view of experiences in this field, to admit likewise the fact that such application would be considered incompatible with the domestic legislation of the detaining Power, and moreover would constitute serious menace not only to the general activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross on behalf of prisoners of war and civilian internees, but also endanger the limited possibilities which we enjoy of assisting the few groups of persons who are not protected, either directly or by analogy, by international Conventions. The International Committee must, it will be remembered, take extreme care that a province, in which the belligerents have accepted our ministrations, should not be closed to future action.

The same observation applies to the proposal contained in the last paragraph of the message from the War Refugee Board "to rescue from the occupied areas Jews and other persons who are victims of persecution". Any such attempt by the International Committee of the Red Cross would at once have the most unfortunate consequences for their entire work--an eventuality which they cannot conscientiously envisage.

Since repeated and conclusive experience in this field leads us to suppose that any steps of this kind would not only be altogether fruitless, but might even do more harm than good, the International Committee must, to their regret, abide by the proposals they have already submitted to the authorities in Washington and to the Intergovernmental Committee in London. After careful consideration of the problem and thorough exploration of all avenues in other fields of action, the International Committee are, in other words, compelled to confine themselves strictly to relief work, within the limits which circumstances prescribe.

The scheme for the relief of civilian war victims,

irrespective

irrespective of race and religion, with which the War Refugee Board is familiar, is, to our mind, and for the present, the only province in which action by the International Committee can produce useful results. Moreover, the scope of such action can be widened, in obedience to conditions prevailing, only in so far as publicity of any kind is avoided. In this connection, we are happy to stress the fact that the International Committee have achieved encouraging results in the field of relief work. It was largely due to the kind support given to our suggestions by the War Refugee Board a short time ago, that relief activities on behalf of Jews in certain countries could be undertaken. This work is worth being pursued.

As regards the other countries mentioned in the message of the War Refugee Board, and in which the International Committee are also engaged actively, here too we must confine ourselves to questions of purely material relief, and we shall be pleased to receive, as soon as possible, any assistance the War Refugee Board is able to give us, with a view to our taking practical action along the lines we have submitted to their consideration on behalf of civilian war victims without distinction of race or creed.

In certain countries of South-Eastern Europe, and as far as circumstances allowed, the International Committee have, nevertheless, been instrumental in facilitating Jewish emigration to Palestine. On 5 May, 1944, we forwarded to the United States Legation at Bern a note (G.59/5) on the work done during the preceding months. In this respect also--the question concerns primarily safe-conducts--the degree of responsibility we are in a position to assume, depends not upon ourselves, but on the extent to which circumstances and the Governments interested permit.

The International Committee of the Red Cross would be extremely grateful to you, my dear Mr. Minister, if you would inform the War Refugee Board of the above reply, and request them to consider this communication as confidential, since any publicity given to these matters can be prejudicial to the same persons whom we are endeavouring to assist.

I remain, my dear Mr. Minister,

Yours sincerely,

MAX HUBER
President of the International
Committee of the Red Cross.

OCT 5 AM 11 00
WASHINGTON D.C.
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern

TO: Secretary of State, Washington

DATE: May 17, 1944

NUMBER: 3144

[redacted]

A fifteen paragraph letter dated May 12 has been received from the President of IRC, Mr. Max Huber, in reply to my May 2 letter which contained information setforth in April 29 telegram No. 1498 from the Department. My May 17 telegram No. 3147 transmitted first thirteen paragraphs of text of Huber's letter under reference, in which "subjects" means "the Jews" "umpire" means "German authorities"; "league" means "world Jewish Congress"; "respondents" means "the International Committee of the Red Cross"; and "inquirer" means "War Refugee Board".

The following is a paraphrase of paragraph fourteen: Nevertheless so far as conditions permitted IRC have been instrumental in facilitating emigration of Jews from some southeastern European countries to Palestine. Memorandum dated May 5 describing work done has been furnished U. S. Legation at Bern by us. (Note from Legation: If and when mailing facilities permit, copy will be forwarded by microfilm.) As regards responsibility which we can assume primarily in matter of safe conduct for vessels it does not depend upon ourselves but rather on interested governments and on circumstances.

As regards fifteenth paragraph: It is desire of IRC that War Refugee Board be informed but that since any publicity can be prejudicial to some persons we are trying to help, it requests that communication be kept confidential.

HARRISON

CC: Sec'y, Abrahamson, Akzin, Cohn, Bernstein, DuBois, Friedman, Hedel, Gaston, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannen, Marks, McCormack, Rains, Sargey, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Pehle, Files.

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

Bern
Dated May 17, 1944
Rec'd 3:25 a.m. 18th

Secretary of State,

Washington.

3147. Seventeenth.

One. I beg to thank you sincerely for your kind letter of 2 May, 1944, in which you reproduce message from INQUIRER requesting respondents to approach certain governments with view to obtaining for subjects and other persons interned treatment comparable with that which is accorded to civilian internees to whom Geneva Convention relative to treatment of prisoners of war is applied by analogy or failing such treatment that such persons be placed on equal footing with civilian internees as regards permission to receive relief.

Two. We desire in first place to point out that steps of this nature by respondents would go far beyond limits of their traditional capacity and that governments to whom such request might be addressed would not fail to view this proposal from that particular angle.

Three. In provisions of international agreements respondents have only slender basis upon which to found their humanitarian activities. Latter are therefore dependent upon goodwill of belligerent states and can only take practical shape insofar as they are accepted or solicited by governments concerned.

Four. Consequently respondents might lay themselves open to objection that they were going beyond limits of their competences and trespassing upon internal concerns of state should they attempt to act on behalf of certain categories of persons whom that state considered to be subject exclusively to its domestic legislation.

Five. Exceptional position of respondents as neutral intermediary between belligerent countries precludes their seeking other solutions than those which offer practical hope of realization through appropriate action in quarters where best results may be expected.

Six. The proposal contained in point one of message from INQUIRER has we may add been submitted on several occasions to respondents by League. On each occasion respondents were obliged to answer that numerous endeavors they had made on behalf of subjects had invariably met with negative answer with exception of certain concessions with regards to relief measures.

Seven....

Seven. Under these circumstances we must admit that application by respondents to umpire in this matter would not only have no prospect of success but might even in eyes of umpire appear - quite unjustifiable - dictated by political rather than by humanitarian motives.

Eight. We deeply regret having to confine ourselves to purely relief activities on behalf of persons who do not enjoy protection of convention applicable to prisoners of war and civilian internees. This circumstance is not due to absence of endeavors of all kinds by respondents on behalf of such persons - irrespective of race - with view to their assimilation with civilian internees by reason of their enemy nationality. Unfortunately not one of these approaches has been successful.

Nine. As regards point two respondents are compelled in view of experiences in this field to admit likewise fact that such application would be considered incompatible with domestic legislation of detaining power and moreover would constitute serious menace not only to general activities of respondents on behalf of prisoners of war and civilian internees but also endanger limited possibilities which we enjoy of assisting few groups of persons who are not protected either directly or by analogy by international conventions. Respondents must it will be remembered take extreme care that province in which belligerents have accepted our ministrations should not be closed to future action.

Ten. Same observation applies to proposal contained in last paragraph of message from INQUIRER "to rescue from the occupied areas subjects and other persons who are victims of persecution". Any such attempt by respondents would at once have most unfortunate consequences for their entire work - an eventuality which they cannot conscientiously envisage.

Eleven. Since repeated and conclusive experience in this field leads us to suppose that any steps of this kind would not only be altogether fruitless but might even do more harm than good respondents must to their regret abide by proposals they have already submitted to authorities in Washington and to Inter-Governmental Committee in London. After careful consideration of problem and exploration of all avenues in other fields of action respondents are in other words compelled to confine themselves strictly to relief work within limits which circumstances prescribe.

Twelve. Scheme for relief of civilian war victims irrespective of race and religion with which INQUIRER is familiar is to our mind and for present only province in which action by respondents can produce useful results.

results. Moreover scope of such action can be widened in obedience to conditions prevailing only insofar as publicity of any kind is avoided. In this connection we are happy to stress fact that respondents have achieved encouraging results in field of relief work. It was largely due to kind support given to our suggestions by INQUIRER short time ago that relief activities on behalf of subjects in certain countries could be undertaken. This work is worth being pursued.

Thirteen. As regards other countries mentioned in message of INQUIRER and in which respondents are also engaged actively here too we must confine ourselves to questions of purely material relief and we shall be pleased to receive as soon as possible any assistance INQUIRER is able to give us with view to our taking practical action along lines we have submitted to their consideration on behalf of civilian war victims without distinction of race or creed.

HARRISON

HTM

cc: Bee'y, Abrahamson, Akin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Kadel, Laughlin, Lesser, Lenfert, Mann, Mannen, Marks, McCormack, Maine, Margey, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, M. D. White, Fehle, Files.

(Enclosure to Despatch No. 8105 dated May 5, 1944, from American Legation, Bern)

C O P Y

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE
Agence Centrale Des Prisonniers De Guerre

Rappeler dans la réponse:
G.59/5 G.85
JES/HL

Genève, May 5th, 1944
Palais du Conseil-Général

Dear Sirs:

Referring to your letter of April 7th, 1944, we have the honour to transmit to you a chronological summary of the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross and their delegates concerning the question of Jewish emigration from the Balkans.

For your convenience, we have condensed this summary as follows:

At the beginning of 1942, M. Barlas, representative at Istambul of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, consulted the International Committee's delegate at Ankara concerning the emigration of Jewish children from the Balkans. He enquired particularly as to the possibility of utilizing a steamer, which was at his disposal, for the transportation of these emigrants from Constanza to Istambul under the protection of the Red Cross emblem.

The Committee hastened to inform M. Barlas of the conditions under which they were prepared to grant the use of their emblem and their protection to the said vessel. Such a step is necessarily subject to the granting of safe conducts by the belligerent governments; the Committee therefore invited the organizing institutions to supply the data which would permit the necessary application to the governments concerned.

The above plan for the conveyance by sea of children from Constanza to Istambul seems to have failed, because of the delay in securing the needful authorizations and the difficulties arising in the technical organization of the voyage. At that moment, our representative in Ankara already made application to the Turkish Foreign Office, with a view to securing their consent, in principle, to the transit of Jewish emigrants.

This project was subsequently modified, and at the end of May 1942, the Jewish Agency for Palestine informed our delegate that supervision by the International Committee was no longer needed, since the Agency intended to send the children by rail to Istambul, whence they would travel on board a Turkish steamer to Mersina or Alexandretta. The

Agency

To the
Legation of the United States of America,
Berne.

Agency requested the Committee, however, to secure the Bulgarian Government's permission for the transit of a number of Jewish children from Rumania and Hungary. The Bulgarian Government gave a favourable reply to this demand.

The Committee was furthermore requested to notify the next-of-kin of persons in whose name immigration visas to Palestine were being issued, and of whom lists were furnished. The Committee could not see their way to satisfying this demand, since they had learned that the British authorities had decided to deal with the problem of Jewish emigration through the channel of the Protecting Power. The Committee therefore handed the said lists to the Swiss Government until, on January 22nd, 1943, the British Legation asked to receive them.

In the meantime, the Turkish Government authorized the transit of a number of Jewish emigrants by the Taurus Express, and parties of Jews were conveyed, through Bulgaria, wholly by rail. In this matter also, the Committee and their representatives, acting at the request of the Jewish organizations concerned, made repeated application to various authorities, with a view to securing the necessary permits and facilities.

In March 1943, the Committee were again asked by the Jewish Agency to grant their protection to transports by sea. Following on the increase of immigration permits to Palestine for Jews from Eastern Europe, and seeing the limited number of emigrants (a few hundred monthly) who were allowed to travel through Turkey, the Jewish Agency attempted to organize transports by sea from Dedeagatch to Haifa. The Committee at once agreed to allow the use of their emblem, and to apply to the belligerent States, as soon as a neutral vessel had been chartered by the organizations concerned.

On April 5th, 1943, the Committee, through their representative in London, submitted a note to the Foreign Office concerning Jewish relief. The question of Jewish emigration was alluded to in the following terms:

> "Finally, the International Red Cross Committee wish to draw the attention of the Foreign Office to the following problem:
>
> "Private organizations in the Balkan States-in Rumania in particular-as well as the World Jewish Congress, have urged the International Red Cross Committee to assist in organizing the emigration of Jews to Palestine.
>
> "For the time being, and as long as they have received no official request, the International Committee do not contemplate any other course of action than to provide for the transport by sea of Jewish emigrants traveling to Palestine under the protection of the Red Cross emblem, as is already done in the case of ships carrying consignments for prisoners of war between Lisbon and Marseilles.

"The

"The terms upon which the International Committee authorize the use of their particular emblems are the following:

"1) Neutral vessels shall be chartered by the organizations concerned;

"2) The costs involved shall be borne wholly by these organizations;

"3) The ships shall be accompanied by convoy agents of the International Committee;

"4) The ships shall serve solely for the transport of emigrants, to the exclusion of any other persons or cargoes.

"The International Committee would greatly appreciate information as to the views of the British authorities on this matter, and would be glad to learn whether they would be, in principle, prepared to lend their support to an action of the International Red Cross Committee carried out within the limits indicated above."

A reply to this note was received only on June 9th, the British Consulate in Geneva informing the Committee that the British authorities were considering the possibility - in case no other means offered - of chartering the "Lynn Drottningholm" for the transport of Jews from Turkey to Haifa, and asking that appropriate steps be taken with the German and Italian Governments for the transfer of this vessel from the Baltic to Istambul. The Consulate further informed us that the British Government agreed to the conditions specified in our note, and hoped that the ship would sail under the Committee's auspices, if the safe conducts were secured. Although the Committee knew by experience that there was no hope of the German Government's allowing the vessel to leave the Baltic, they submitted the matter to the said Government, while drawing the British Government's attention to the small prospect of carrying out this project.

Meanwhile the Bulgarian authorities had suspended the transit visas granted to a party of Jewish children from Rumania. In reply to their request, the Committee were informed by the Bulgarian Legation at Berne that, owing to police considerations, the Bulgarian Government were unable, for the present, to grant the said parties of children permission to travel through the country.

During the months of May and June 1943, a special delegation of the International Committee visited Eastern Europe, and especially Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. Local Jewish organizations were consulted, and the particular attention of the authorities and of Red Cross Societies was drawn to the importance of the problem of Jewish emigration, and to the desirability of exploring with the greatest care all avenues that might lead to its favourable solution.

At the same time, our delegate in Bucarest informed us

that

that the Rumanian Red Cross was trying to find shipping for the transport of Jewish emigrants, and that the Rumanian Government was anxious that the Committee should grant the use of their emblems, and were applying for a German permit allowing such vessels to sail. The Committee then studied the possibility of organizing transports through the Black Sea, and of purchasing or chartering ships for this purpose.

On July 5th, 1943, our representative at Ankara was instructed to obtain from the various Embassies the agreement in principle to issue American, British, German and Italian safe conducts for certain Turkish vessels secured by the Jewish Agency for Palestine. We moreover requested our delegate to obtain assurances that these voyages could be undertaken in proper conditions of safety. In reply the Jewish Agency informed us that the British Legation in Berne would give the Committee directly the desired information. On July 9th, 1943, the Committee wrote to the said Legation. Replying on July 10th, the latter informed the Committee that, acting on instructions from its Government, it had made application in this matter to the Protecting Power.

Subsequently, our delegation at Ankara advised us that the utilization of Turkish vessels was out of the question.

On August 4th, the British Consulate at Geneva informed the Committee that there was no further occasion to employ the "Lynn Drottningholm" for transporting Jews, since the S.S. "Sontay" was available for that purpose. The Committee has not learned the issue of the proposal to make use of the "Sontay". During the following months, the Committee remained in contact with the Hungarian, Rumanian, Bulgarian and Turkish Governments, with a view to securing the necessary facilities for Jewish emigration, and were meanwhile pursuing negotiations in other quarters for the purpose of chartering a vessel.

On December 19th, 1943, the Committee received a telegram from Dr. J. Costinescu, President of the Rumanian Red Cross, stating that with the consent of the Government, the Red Cross was planning to send to Istambul, in about a fortnight's time, and afterwards weekly, parties of Jewish child emigrants, between the ages of ten and sixteen. The Rumanian Red Cross requested the Committee to apply to the belligerent parties with a view to safeguarding the steamer "Bellacitta", sailing under the Bulgarian ensign and the Rumanian Red Cross flag, between Constanza or Mangalia and Istambul. As regards Russia, the Rumanian Red Cross had applied to the Turkish Red Crescent.

On receiving the necessary data concerning the vessel and the proposed trips, the Committee applied on January 4th, 1944, through the Consulates at Geneva, for the American, British and German safe conducts for the "Bellacitta".

The Red Crescent and the Turkish Foreign Office having declined the request made by the Rumanian Red Cross, that

they

they should ask the Soviet Government for free passage, the British Embassy at Ankara, acting on the wish expressed by our delegation, submitted the matter to the Foreign Office which agreed to approach the USSR in the matter. With the exception of the German Government, all the Governments concerned have granted their safe conducts to the "Bellacitta". A further request made to the German Consulate in Geneva on February 29th has met with no reply. We thereupon offered the Rumanian Red Cross to notify the belligerents of the journeys of the "Bellacitta" without awaiting the safe conduct, should the Rumanian Red Cross deem it impossible to delay the proposed transports any longer. In this case, however, the vessel could not enjoy the benefit of protection by the Red Cross emblem. Difficulties arose meanwhile and prevented the emigrants from embarking, the organizers having been arrested in Rumania. The question remained in suspense, and it was only on March 27th, 1944, that our delegate was able to inform the Committee that the sailing would take place on April 3rd. The departure was notified to the belligerents concerned, but was postponed, first to the 9th, and then to the 14th of April. Finally, the "Bellacitta" arrived at Istambul on April 24th.

While the Rumanian Red Cross was thus organizing this emigration, the Jewish institutions in Turkey and Rumania were endeavoring to arrange for transports by sea and by land. At the end of March, 243 emigrants left on a small Bulgarian steamer, the "Milka" without protection and without any Turkish visa. On April 8th, 245 refugees reached Istambul on the "Maritza", also sailing without protection.

In the hope of securing shipping for the transportation of emigrants under the Red Cross emblem, the Committee negotiated for the purchase of two modern Rumanian passenger steamers, the "Transilvania" and the "Bessarabia".

On March 20th, our delegate at Ankara informed us that the Turkish Government had agreed to a Turkish vessel being put at the disposal of the International Committee for the transportation of 1,500 Jewish emigrants from Constanza to Haifa.

On March 24th we received from our delegate in Ankara the necessary details concerning this vessel, the "Tari", of 4,000 tons. On the same day application was made for a German safe conduct, through the channel of the German Consulate in Geneva. Instructions were further given to our delegate to request the German Embassy at Ankara to recommend our application in Berlin.

The Committee have also been informed that the Rumanian Government are endeavouring to secure the approval of the German authorities to the proposed scheme of emigration by means of the "Tari", to sail under the auspices of the International Committee.

No

No reply has yet been received on this matter from the German authorities.

* * *

The above notes furnish only a summary of the evolution of the emigration problem as it has been placed before the Committee. No mention is made of the numerous steps taken by the Committee and by numbers of their delegates, who have been in almost daily consultation with the authorities and the organizations concerned, with a view to removing the obstacles which constantly thwarted the execution of every project. These plans have also been ceaselessly modified, in consequence of difficulties arising. The Committee were happy to serve as intermediaries, whenever private organizations requested their assistance in facilitating emigration. The problem as a whole was beyond their scope, since the question of immigration into Palestine was, until a short time ago, considered by the Governments interested -- with the exception of the Rumanian Government -- as a matter to be dealt with through the intermediary of a Protecting Power.

The International Committee have always been ready to grant the use of their emblem and their guarantee to neutral vessels which were to be placed at their disposal for the transport of emigrants. This guarantee is, however, subject to two conditions:

1) that the emigrants hold entrance visas for Palestine;

2) that all Governments concerned grant free passage to the vessel.

Very truly yours,
Pour le Comité International
de la Croix Rouge:

R. GALLOPIN

Directeur de la Division des
Prisonniers internés et civils.

Despatch No. 8105

DTC - NL/CM

24 avril 1944

Résumé chronologique de l'activité
du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge
relative à l'émigration de Juifs de Roumanie,
de Bulgarie et de Hongrie.

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1942

30 mars - Le Comité International de la Croix-Rouge est informé par son délégué à Ankara que M. Barlas, de l'Agence juive pour la Palestine à Istanbul, désire savoir si le signe de la Croix-Rouge peut-être apposé sur un bateau dont il dispose en ce moment pour le transport d'enfants juifs entre Constantza et Istanbul.

31 mars - Le Comité International communique à son délégué à Ankara les conditions auxquelles les transports envisagés pourraient se faire sous ses auspices, soit: obtention des sauf-conduits de la part des gouvernements belligérants intéressés; observation des règles auxquelles sont soumis les navires au service du Comité International; garanties relatives à une bonne organisation des transports, etc.

28 avril - Le Comité International demande à son délégué à Ankara quelle suite fut donée au projet du transport par bateau mentionné ci-dessus.

18 mai - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué qu'il est intervenu auprès du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères turc en vue d'obtenir l'autorisation de transit de principe. Celle-ci ne pourra être donnée que lorsqu'une autorisation d'entrée en Palestine aura été délivrée par l'Ambassade britannique à Istanbul. Par la même occasion le délégué du Comité International à Ankara fait part que M. Barlas est en pourparlers pour l'achat ou l'affretement du bateau grec "Lily".

31 mai - Le Comité International est avisé par son délégué à Ankara que le programme du voyage est modifié. Les enfants se rendraient de Budapest et de Bucarest à Istanbul par voie ferrée via Sofia. D'Istanbul à Mersine ou Alexandrette le voyage se ferait par bateau turc sans nécessité d'une participation du Comité International, et le dernier trajet s'effectuerait par train. Le Comité International est sollicité d'obtenir l'autorisation de transit bulgare.

3 juin - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara une liste des candidats à l'émigration ainsi qu'une note de M. Barlas faisant mention de l'obtention de 270 certificats d'immigration en Palestine, donnant des renseignements sur

l'organisation

l'organisation du voyage, informant que les enfants seront identifiés par les soins des consuls de Suisse à Budapest et Bucarest, enfin, demandant au Comité International d'intervenir pour que le transit bulgare et turc soit accordé.

5 juin - Télégramme du Comité International au Gouvernement bulgare lui demandant d'autoriser le passage d'un convoi de 200 enfants juifs de Roumanie et de Hongrie. Le Comité International adresse le même jour un télégramme à son délégué à Ankara le priant d'obtenir la même autorisation de la part des Autorités turques.

13 juin - Télégramme du Secrétaire général aux Affaires Etrangères à Sofia informant le Comité International que le Gouvernement bulgare autorise le passage à travers la Bulgarie d'un convoi de 200 enfants juifs se rendant en Palestine si le Gouvernement turc est d'accord de donner une autorisation analogue, et priant le Comité International d'aviser les autorités bulgares à l'avance de l'arrivée du convoi en Bulgarie afin que les formalités pour les visas puissent être réglées en temps utile.

18 juin - Le Comité International donne connaissance du télégramme ci-dessus à son délégué à Ankara en le priant de bien vouloir faire le nécessaire pour l'obtention du visa bulgare.

22 juin - Le Comité International met l'Agence juive pour la Palestine à Genève au courant des démarches entreprises.

23 juin - L'Agence juive pour la Palestine à Genève prie le Comité International d'intervenir auprès du Département Politique Fédéral afin que celui-ci donne suite à la demande de la Légation britannique à Berne de procéder à l'identification, par l'entremise de ses agents consulaires à Budapest et Bucarest, des 200 enfants autorisés à émigrer en Palestine.

4 juill. - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Ankara que M. Barlas demande également l'intervention du Comité International dans cette question d'identification.

9 juill. - Le Comité International informe l'Agence juive à Genève qu'il ne lui paraît pas possible d'intervenir auprès du Département Politique Fédéral pour une question traitée par la Légation britannique.

27 juill. - L'Agence juive à Genève demande au Comité International de faire accompagner des transports par un agent-convoyeur du Comité International.

5 août - Le Comité International informe l'Agence juive à

Genève

Genève qu'il ne voit pas la nécessité de désigner un agent-convoyeur du Comité International, étant donné que c'est entre les mains d'une Puissance Protectrice que les Autorités britanniques ont placé le problème de l'immigration en Palestine des enfants juifs.

30 octobre - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara les condition auxquelles le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères turc aurait accordé le transit pour 270 enfants, et est informé que M. Barlas insiste pour avoir un agent-convoyeur du Comité International.

19 nov. - Le Comité International reçoit confirmation du côté suisse que la question de l'émigration des enfants juifs est effectivement entre les mains de la Suisse agissant, sur demande britannique, comme Puissance Protectrice.

24 Nov. - L'Agence juive à Genève donne au Comité International des renseignements sur la situation actuelle de la question de l'émigration des 270 enfants juifs répartis comme suit: 122 pour la Hongrie et 148 pour la Roumanie. Les 122 enfants de Hongrie sont identifiés et en possession d'un visa de transit bulgare et turc; un petit groupe de 50 de ces enfants aurait dû s'embarquer le 23 novembre. Pour les 148 enfants de Roumanie le visa de transit bulgare aurait été refusé. L'Agence juive demande une lettre du Comité International pour la Légation de Bulgarie à Berne afin que celle-ci intervienne auprès de son Gouvernement.

4 déc. - Le Comité International demande à la Legation de Bulgarie d'intervenir auprès du Gouvernement bulgare en faveur du visa de transit des 148 enfants juifs de Roumanie.

22 déc. - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara un télégramme l'informant que le visa de transit bulgare n'a pas encore été accordé pour les enfants de Roumanie.

23 déc. - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara la liste des personnes qui obtiendront, dès leur arrivée à Istanbul, le visa palestinien et le visa de transit syrien. Le Comité International est en outre prié d'avertir les familles en question.

1943
6 janvier - L'Agence juive pour la Palestine informe le Comité International que les difficultés de transit pour la Bulgarie ont été aplanies et nous signale que des difficultés de transport ont par contre surgi à Budapest le 23 novembre. Les Autorités allemandes, qui contrôlent la navigation sur le Danube, ont retire l'autorisation hongroise d'em-

barquer

barquer les enfants juifs sur un vapeur danubien. Il a donc fallu obtenir encore un visa roumain afin de pouvoir partir par rail et le premier groupe pourra partir dans le courant de la semaine.

11 janvier - L'Agence juive à Genève informe le Comité International qu'un premier groupe d'enfants est arrivé en Bulgarie le 8 courant et est reparti le même jour pour Istanbul. Elle demande si les listes à communiquer aux personnes intéressées sont parvenues au Comité International.

14 janvier - La Légation de Bulgarie confirme au Comité International que l'accord pour le transit a été accordé à condition que le Comité International lui communique les renseignements demandés pour délivrer les visas.

18 janvier - Le Comité International informe l'Agence juive à Genève qu'il transmettra les listes aux Autorités suisses puis-qu'elles sont chargées par le Gouvernement britannique de traiter la question, c'est donc elles qui transmettront les informations nécessaires aux intéressés.

22 janvier - La Légation britannique à Berne, se référant à la lettre du Comité International du 18 janvier adressée à l'Agence juive, demande au Comité International de lui remettre les listes qui parviennent au Comité International.

11 février - L'Agence juive à Genève donne au Comité International un exposé de la situation. Le Gouvernement britannique aurait accordé 500 autres permis d'immigration pour enfants juifs venant de Roumanie et de Hongrie, et 4500 permis pour la Bulgarie comprenant 4000 enfants et 500 adultes.

23 février - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Bucarest copie d'une lettre de la Compagnie des Wagons-Lits demandant si le Comité International pourrait reprendre les pourparlers que M. Barlas avait entamés à Stockholm en vue de détourner un bateau suédois pour le transport des juifs.

6 mars - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara le télégramme suivant: "Vous informe arrivée 5/3 Istanbul 50 enfants émigrés Bulgarie - Passeront ce soir à Ankara par Taurus Express."

12 mars - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara un télégramme disant que M. Barlas l'a informé qu'il pourra disposer de 5000 visas palestiniens et que la Bulgarie semble disposée à accorder le transit, ce qui éviterait la navigation sur la Mer Noire et permettrait d'embarquer les émigrants à Dedeaghatch. M. Barlas

aurait

aurait d'autre part obtenu une offre de bateaux suédois avec option jusqu'au 15 mars, mais il demande si d'un autre côté les bateaux suédois "Bardaland" et "Fenris" seraient disponibles pour un ou deux voyages de Dedéaghatch à Alexandrette. Y aurait-il possibilité de placer ces transports sous les auspices du Comité International? Cette proposition a été substituée dans la suite par une autre.

13 mars - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Bucarest qu'un premier convoi de 75 enfants doit partir le 14 mars par chemin de fer via Bulgarie et Turquie.

16 mars - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara un télégramme l'informant que M. Barlas a obtenu une prolongation au 15 avril pour l'option du bateau suédois "Oresund" et que, d'autre part, deux bateaux turcs seraient disponibles, le s/s "Akbel" et le s/s "Uygin".

18 mars - Le Comité International envoie un télégramme à son délégué à Ankara pour demander des précisions sur l'organisme responsable des transports envisagés, en l'informant que les signes du Comité International pourraient être accordés à condition que le Comité International soit sollicité par l'organisation responsable et que des garanties soient fournies quant à l'organisation des transports.

19 mars - Le Comité International envoie le même télégramme à son délégué à Bucarest.

24 mars - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Ankara que l'organisme responsable est l'Agence juive pour la Palestine, que M. Barlas est compétent pour la mise en service des navires et les question financières et que les navires seront qualifiés par l'Ambassade britannique.

25 mars - L'attention du Comité International est officieusement attirée sur le fait que son activité risque de faire double emploi avec les disposition prises par l'intermédiaire de la Puissance Protectrice.

30 mars - Le Comité International informe son délégué à Ankara qu'il consent à accorder ses signes mais qu'il ne pourra entreprendre des démarches auprès des Gouvernements intéressés avant que les conditions communiquées en Mai 1942 ne soient remplies.

8 avril - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Bucarest que la Légation de Bulgarie à Bucarest a notifié à la Centrale juive de renvoyer le départ prévu pour le 6 avril.

5 avril -

5 avril - Le Comité International envoie à sa Délégation à Londres une Note pour le Foreign Office, dont nous extrayons le passage suivant:

"Finally, the International Committee wish to draw the attention of the Foreign Office to the following problem:

"Private organisations in the Balkanic countries (in Rumania in particular) as well as the World Jewish Congress, have urged the International Committee of the Red Cross to help in organising the emigration of Jews of Palestine.

"For the time being, and as long as they have not received any official request, the International Committee do not contemplate any other course of action than to provide for the transport by sea of Jewish emigrants travelling to Palestine under the protection of the Red Cross emblem, as is already done in the case of ships carrying consignments for prisoners of war between Lisbon and Marseilles.

"The terms upon which the International Committee of the Red Cross authorise the use of their particular signs are the following:

1) Neutral ships shall be chartered by the organisations concerned.

2) The expenses involved shall be entirely met by these organisations.

3) The ships shall be accompanied by convoy-agents of the International Committee.

4) The ships shall serve solely for the transport of emigrants, to the exclusion of any other persons or cargoes.

"The International Committee of the Red Cross would greatly appreciate being informed of the views of the British Authorities on this matter and would be glad to know whether they would be in principle prepared to lend their support to an action of the International Committee of the Red Cross carried out within the limits indicated above."

4 avril - Le Comité International reçoit par l'intermédiaire de son délégué à Bucarest copie d'une lettre du Président intérimaire du Conseil des Ministres, M. Mihai Antonesco, donant l'accord du Gouvernement roumain à l'émigration juive.

15 avril

15 avril - Le Comité International envoie une lettre à la Légation de Bulgarie à Berne l'informant qu'il vient d'être avisé par l'Agence juive que les visas de transit de 74 enfants, du groupe des 270, dont le passage avait été autorisé, viennent d'être suspendus par ordre du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères à Sofia, et le priant d'intervenir pour que cette question soit reconsidérée.

16 avril - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Ankara que M. Barlas de l'Agence juive pour la Palestine lui avait déclaré avoir obtenu l'accord de principe de L'Ambassade britannique pour le transport par bateau d'enfants juifs entre Istanbul et Haifa.

20 avril - Le Comité International demande à son délégué à Ankara de prier l'Ambassade britannique de bien vouloir communiquer au Comité International l'accord du Foreign Office pour les transports envisagés et lui faire savoir que les certificats d'immigration sont accordés. Le Comité International lui demande en outre de veiller à ce que le navire envisagé soit soumis à l'expertise du Lloyd et d'obtenir des assurances concernant les conditions et la nourriture à bord et le priant de trouver un convoyeur du Comité International sur place.

28 avril - Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de son délégué à Ankara répondant au précédent et communiquant que M. Barlas reprend les pourparlers pour un bateau turc. Le délégué ajoute qu'un convoyeur suisse a été trouvé sur place.

7 avril - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara copie d'une Note de M. Barlas concernant le plan du transport remis à l'Ambassade brittanique.

15 mai - Lettre de la Légation de Bulgarie à Berne informant le Comité International que pour des raisons de police le Gouvernement bulgare ne peut pas accorder actuellement l'autorisation de transit pour le groupe d'enfants roumains devant se rendre en Palestine.

Mai - Le Lt. Colonel Chapuisat, Membre du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge, se rend à Sofia et à Bucarest et appuie personnellement les efforts déployés en vue d'obtenir le concours des Gouvernements bulgare et roumain pour l'émigration des juifs.

27 mai - Lettre du Colonel Chapuisat, de passage à Bucarest, informant le Comité International que la Croix-

Rouge

Rouge roumaine cherche actuellement à se procurer des navires et que le Gouvernement a sollicité l'autorisation allemande de les faire circuler. La Croix-Rouge roumaine désirerait que le Comité International prêtât ses signes.

9 juin - Le Consulat britannique à Genève, se référant à la Note du 5 avril du Comité International au Foreign Office, informe le Comité International que les autorités britanniques examinent la possibilité, au cas où il n'y aurait pas d'autres possibilités, d'affréter le "Lynn Drottningholm" pour le transport des juifs de Turquie à Haifa. Il demande que le Comité International fasse des démarches auprès des Gouvernements allemand et italien pour amener le bateau de la Baltique à Istanbul. Il informe enfin le Comité International que les Autorités britanniques accèdent aux conditions posées dans la Note du Comité du 5 avril et espère que le Comité International consentira à ce que le bateau navigue sous ses auspices si les sauf-conduits sont accordés.

11 juin - Le Comité International informe son délégué à Ankara que le résultat de l'intervention à Sofia est négatif et que le Comité International étudiera éventuellement l'embarquement dans un port roumain.

11 juin - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Bucarest communication d'une proposition de céder à titre gratuit au Comité International un bateau roumain, actuellement en construction, pour le transport d'enfants juifs.

21 juin - Le Comité International donne connaissance à son délégué à Bucarest des conditions auxquelles le bateau en question pourrait être transféré à la "Fondation pour l'organisation de transports de Croix-Rouge".

25 juin - Le Comité International fait part au Consulat britannique à Genève qu'il soumet à Berlin le projet d'utilisation du "Lynn Drottningholm" bien qu'il ait très peu d'espoir que les Autorités allemandes consentent à laisser sortir ce bateau de la Baltique.

8 juillet - Le Comité International reçoit de sa délégation à Bucarest des détails sur le bateau en construction qui fut offert au Comité International pour servir entre un port roumain et Istanbul ou Mersine.

Cette offre ne fut pas maintenue.

10 juillet - Réponse de la Légation britannique à Berne informant le Comité International que conformément

aux

aux instructions de son Gouvernement, elle s'est adressée au Gouvernement suisse comme Puissance Protectrice dans cette affaire et suggérant au Comité International de s'adresser à ce dernier.

14 juillet - Lettre de l'Agence Juive au Comité International l'informant que d'après une communication qu'elle a reçue de M. Barlas, le transit des groupes d'enfants de Hongrie à travers la Bulgarie aurait été autorisé. Par la suite le Comité International ne reçut aucune confirmation de cette communication.

4 août - Le Comité International est informé par le Consulat britannique à Genève qu'il n'y a pas lieu d'utiliser le "Lynn Drottningholm" pour le transport des juifs, étant donné que le s/s "Sontay" sera disponible à cet effet. Le Comité International ne reçut toutefois aucun renseignement à ce sujet.

10 août - Démarche personnelle par lettre du Col. Chapuisat, Membre du Comité International, auprès du Directeur des Affaires politiques du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères à Sofia concernant l'affaire juive.

26 août - L'Agence juive informe le Comité International que le permis de sortie de Bulgarie est encore en suspens, et demande que le Comité International intervienne auprès du Ministre de Bulgarie à Berne.

30 septembre- Etant donné qu'aucun des projets d'émigration à l'étude ne semblait réalisable, le Comité International prie son délégué à Ankara d'examiner la possibilité d'affréter un navire turc par une des organisations intéressées.

19 octobre - En réponse le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Ankara le télégramme suivant: "Affrètement navire turc absolument exclu."

30 septembre- Le Comité International reçoit de sa délégation à Bucarest une note donnant un exposé général de la situation.

3 décembre - M. Meister, armateur à Zurich, informe le Comité International que son représentant à Istanbul à obtenu de disposer du bateau turc "Vatan" pour le transport de réfugiés de Roumanie en Palestine.

9 décembre - Le Comité International télégraphie à son délégué à Ankara pour le prier d'examiner la proposition ci-dessus.

19 décembre- Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de M. Costenisou, Président de la Croix Rouge

roumaine

roumaine, que le Comité International fera des démarches auprès des Gouvernements allemand, américain et britannique pour l'obtention des sauf-conduits, mais que le "Bellacitta" naviguera sans les signes ni convoyeur du Comité International, étant donné que ce bateau navigue sous pavillon belligerant.

30 décembre - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Bucarest des renseignements sur le bateau et les voyages envisagés.

1944
4 janvier - Le Comité International demande par l'entremise des Consulats à Genève les sauf-conduits allemand, américain et britannique.

6 janvier - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Ankara que le Croissant rouge turc et le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères turc déclinent la requête de la Croix-Rouge roumaine d'introduire une demande auprès du Gouvernement de l'URSS pour le sauf-conduit.

7 janvier - Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de son délégué à Ankara l'informant que le projet d'utiliser le "Vatan" est hors de question.

11 janvier - Le Comité International demande à M. James (représentant de la Croix-Rouge américaine) si la Croix-Rouge américaine serait disposée à intervenir à Moscou. M. James se propose d'en saisir les Autorités compétentes américaines.

12 janvier - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Ankara qu'en réponse à sa demande, Londres s'est declaré disposé d'intervenir auprès de l'URSS. Le Comité International est informé que les Autorités turques accordent officiellement 640 visas par mois pour le transit par le Taurus Express.

18 janvier - Le Comité International reçoit un rapport de son délégué à Bucarest sur le projet d'émigration par mer de Roumanie en Turquie. Le délégué lui communique quelques renseignements sur une proposition du Gouvernement britannique au Gouvernement suisse d'utiliser un grand paquebot pouvant transporter 5000 émigrés à la fois, et il donne des renseignements sur le projet de la mise en service de deux autres bateau bulgares "Milka" et "Maritza".

17 janvier - Le Comité International reçoit une demande de son délégué à Ankara s'il accepterait de louer pour la durée de la guerre deux bateaux roumains "Transilvania" et "Bassarabia" stationnant dans le port d'Istanbul, qui lui sont proposés par le Gouvernement roumain.

18 janvier - Téléphone du Consulat britannique à Genève in-

formant

formant le Comité International que les autorités britanniques ne comprennent pas bien notre démarche relative au "Bellacitta", étant donné que la Puissance Protectrice s'occupe depuis de longs mois du rapatriement de ces enfants.

25 janvier - Le Comité International reçoit un mémo du World Jewish Congress daté du 22 déc. 1943, transmis par la Délégation du Comité International à Londres.

21 janvier - Le Comité International donne de nouvelles instructions à son délégué à Bucarest concernant le problème de l'émigration.

1 février - Le Comité International envoie le même exposé à sa délégation à Londres en lui faisant remarquer que la tâche du CIRCR serait grandement facilitée s'il pouvait compter sur l'appui des Autorités britanniques.

9 février - Le Comité International informe son délégué à Bucarest que si la Croix-Rouge roumaine estimait ne pas pouvoir différer davantage les transports envisagés, il serait disposé, sans responsabilité de sa part, à communiquer aux belligérants les dates de départ des navires sans attendre l'obtention des sauf-conduits.

10 février - Le Consulat britannique communique au Comité International que son Gouvernement accorde le sauf-conduit pour le "Bellacitta" et demande des renseignements concernant la mise en service du "Maritza" et du "Milka", renseignements que le Comité International lui communique le 15 février.

14 février - Le Comité International reçoit de son délégué à Bucarest le télégramme suivant: "Bellacitta partira probablement fin février".

15 février - Le Comité International communique divers renseignements aux Consulats de Grande-Bretagne et d'Amérique concernant le voyage du "Bellacitta".

23 février - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Bucarest que le "Bellacitta" embarquera à Mangalia au lieu de Constantza, mais que pour le moment toute la question est en suspens étant donné que des difficultés ont surgi et empêchent actuellement l'émigration (arrestation des dirigeants juifs).

24 février - Le Comité International reçoit une lettre, datée du 5 fév. de son délégué à Bucarest, donnant le compte-rendu de son entrevue avec M. Michel Antonescu, Vice-Président du Conseil, remettant copie des Notes qu'il lui a adressées au sujet de l'émigration juive et concernant son intervention pour la libération des personnes juives arrêtées.

29 février -

29 février - Nouvelle démarche du Comité International auprès du Consulat d'Allemagne pour le sauf-conduit du "Bellacitta".

1 mars - Le Comité International reçoit un message de son délégué à Ankara transmettant une proposition de M. Hirschmann (de l'Office américain pour les réfugiés de guerre) pour l'acquisition de navires au moyen de fonds qui seraient remis au Comité International par voie anonyme.

9 mars - Répondant au précédent message le Comité International informe son délégué à Ankara que l'intervention du Comité International dans les transports par mer de juifs dépend du consentement allemand. L'acquisition de paquebots roumains est problématique, vu que d'ultérieures affectations ne sont pas prévisibles. Il serait éventuellement préférable d'affréter un bateau neutre et dans ce cas le financement proposé par M. Hirschmann pourrait être utile.

20 mars - Le Comité International reçoit le message suivant de son délégué à Ankara: "A la suite d'une pressante intervention américaine, le Gouvernement turc a accepté qu'un navire turc soit mis à disposition du Comité International pour transporter 1500 juifs émigrant de Constantza à Haifa. M. Hirschmann demande avec insistance que le navire navigue sous la protection du Comité International."

20 mars - Le Comité International reçoit un autre télégramme de son délégué à Ankara: Hirschmann vous prie introduire demande sauf-conduit pour bateau turc "Tari" 4000 tonnes naviguera avec insignes et convoyeur Comité International. Sauf-conduit russe est demandé à Ankara."

21 mars - Le Comité International demande à son délégué à Ankara les renseignements nécessaires pour solliciter les sauf-conduits et les assurances que les certificats d'immigration en Palestine sont en règle.

23 mars - Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de son délégué à Ankara l'informant que les certificats d'immigration sont en règle et demandant s'il peut appuyer auprès de l'Ambassade à Ankara la demande du Comité International à Berlin pour le sauf-conduit. Le dernier délai pour l'affrètement du "Tari" est le 10 avril.

24 mars - Le Comité International demande au Consulat

d'Allemagne

d'Allemagne le sauf-conduit pour le "Tari".

24 mars - Le Comité International prie son délégué à Ankara d'intervenir auprès de l'Ambassade d'Allemagne pour appuyer sa démarche à Berlin.

27 mars - Le Comité International reçoit le télégramme suivant de son délégué à Bucarest: "Bellacitta partira Constantza nuit deux trois avril transportant 130 enfants 20 adultes Urgencez avis pour sauf-conduit".

28 mars - Le Comité International avise les belligérants intéresses du départ du "Bellacitta" et il prie sa délégation à Ankara d'en faire aviser le Gouvernement de l'URSS par l'Ambassade britannique à Ankara.

28 mars - Le Comité International reçoit le télégramme suivant de son délégué à Bucarest: "Milka parti avec 243 émigrés sans protection ni visa turc."

30 mars - Le Comité International reçoit encore un télégramme de son délégué à Ankara: "URSS déja avisé, ai reçu confirmation personnelle que Moscou garantit tout départ quelle que soit la date".

30 mars - Le Comité International reçoit une Note du 9 mars de son délégué à Bucarest le renseignant sur les réserves qu'il a faites au sujet d'un départ clandestin par le "Maritza" et le "Milka".

30 mars - Le Comité International prie son délégué à Bucarest de rendre attentive la Croix-Rouge roumaine sur le fait que l'apposition sur le "Bellacitta" du signe de la Croix-Rouge par celle-ci constituerait une dérogation à la Convention de la Haye, si ce bateau n'a pas reçu l'accord de tous les belligérants intéressés.

31 mars - Le Comité International envoie de nouvelles instructions à son délégué à Bucarest concernant l'émigration des Juifs.

31 mars - Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de son délégué à Ankara ainsi conçu: "Vous informe que les 243 émigrants partis sans visa sur "Milka" arrivèrent tous à Istanbul le 30/3 et purent repartir 31 matin par train spécial pour Alep."

4 avril - Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de son délégué à Ankara l'informant que l'Ambassade d'Allemagne, ensuite de son entrevue, câbla à Berlin pour demander le sauf-conduit et la route Constantza-Rhodes.

4 avril - Le Comité International reçoit le télégramme suivant de son délégué à Bucarest: "Départ du Bellacitta remis au 9 avril."

6 avril -

6 avril - Le Comité International informe les Consulats allemand, américain et britannique que le départ du "Bellacitta" a été renvoyé au 9 avril.

8 avril - Le Comité International est informé par son délégué à Ankara que 245 réfugiés juifs sont arrivés à Istanbul par le bateau bulgare "Maritza" naviguant sans protection.

11 avril - Le Comité International reçoit un télégramme de son délégué à Bucarest disant que le départ du Bellacitta est remis au vendredi 14 avril.

13 avril - Le Comité International demande aux Consulats américain et britannique les sauf-conduits pour le "Tari".

- - - - -

WASHINGTON D.C.
MAY 21 1944
RECEIVED

War Refugee Bd.
(Treas.)

CONTROL COPY

No. 8105 Bern, May 6, 1944.

Subject: Rescue and Protection of Jewish War Refugees Southeastern Europe by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to previous correspondence regarding the above indicated subject and in particular to the Department's telegram No. 970 of March 23 and subsequent telegraphic correspondence, regarding the procurement from the several belligerent governments of safe conducts to cover a voyage of the steamship TARI from Istanbul to Constanza and return, in order to convey Jewish emigrant passengers from Rumania through Turkey to Palestine. The request for safe conducts for the TARI originated with the International Committee of the Red Cross, which it appears has long been active in an endeavor to effect transportation of Jewish war refugees from southeastern Europe to Palestine, and had previously engaged in active efforts to find other vessels which might be used for this purpose.

During discussions of the general subject between members of the Legation and officials of the Red Cross, it developed that the Red Cross felt that possibly there might be general unfamiliarity with the efforts which the International Red Cross has been making in the past to assist Jewish victims of persecution in Axis and Axis-occupied territory in their attempts to escape therefrom. The Committee was therefore engaged in the preparation of a memorandum summarizing these efforts.

I have now received a communication dated May 5, 1944 from the Director of the Division of Interned and Civil Prisoners of the International Committee, in which there is given a chronological record of the work which the International Committee has been engaged in since the beginning of 1942 in endeavoring to rescue persecuted Jews, particularly from southeastern European districts, and which may be of use to the War Refugee Board in its

efforts

efforts to implement the activities in which the International Committee of the Red Cross has been engaged.

With specific reference to the problem of emigration from Europe to Palestine, the International Committee remark that they have "always been ready to grant the use of their emblem and their guarantee to neutral vessels which were to be placed at their disposal for the transport of emigrants. This guarantee is, however, subject to two conditions: 1) that the emigrants hold entrance visas for Palestine; 2) that all governments concerned grant free passage to the vessel."

All belligerent governments which have been approached for safe conducts for vessels, in recent months when the International Committee has been able to obtain the use of vessels for the project, have willingly and promptly granted the desired safe conducts therefor, with the exception of Germany. Notwithstanding failure to obtain safe conducts from the German Government, several vessels (the S.S. BELLACITTA, the S.S. MILKA and the S.S. MARITZA) have recently succeeded in sailing from Rumania and arriving at Istanbul with several hundreds of refugee emigrants en route to Palestine.

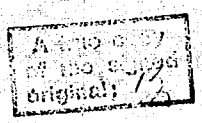
Respectfully yours,

Leland Harrison.

Enclosure:

From International Committee of the Red Cross, May 5, 1944, with enclosure.

File No. 840.1
JKH/mjb
In triplicate to Department.



APR 29 1944

Dear Ira:

I am forwarding to you herewith a copy of a letter received from Marc Peter of the International Red Cross. I suggest that you may wish to contact Mr. Peter directly.

Sincerely,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Ira Hirschmann,
Executive Offices,
Bloomingdale Bros.,
Lexington Ave. & 59th Street,
New York, New York.

Enclosure.

Original signed by Mrs. Pehle

FH:lab 4/29/44

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
DELEGATION TO THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
1645 Connecticut Ave., Washington 9, D. C.

Ref: S/2/h
April 24, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I thank you for your kind letter of April twenty-first, and I shall not fail to forward it to Geneva.

If it is possible, I should like to meet Mr. Hirschmann at any time convenient for him, either at his office or at mine.

Very truly yours,

Marc Peter

Marc Peter
Delegate

MP:MJC

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington

TO: AMLEGATION, Bern

DATED: April 29, 1944
NUMBER: 1498

[redacted]

FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD FOR HARRISON.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 10.

Following for Intercross:

QUOTE In full agreement with interested American welfare agencies War Refugee Board requests Intercross to approach the German and satellite governments, through appropriate and expedient channels, to bring about with respect to Jews and other persons, detained, interned, or otherwise confined because of race, religion, or political belief (1) treatment equal to that accorded civilian internees to when Geneva Convention is currently applied by analogy or (2) equal treatment of such persons to the extent at least that reception and distribution of packages under Intercross supervision be permitted them under guarantees equal to those in effect with respect to the civilian internees referred to in (1) above. War Refugee Board feels strongly that (1) above is preferable and suggests that (2) should be only if in the judgment of Intercross (1) is unobtainable.

Furthermore, War Refugee Board requests Intercross to make every effort to obtain, wherever possible, for Jews and other victims of Nazi oppression (who though they may not be physically interned have been singled out for persecution) facilities and opportunities to obtain food and other necessities on the basis of equality with the local population both from local or domestic sources and through Intercross channels. In addition, War Refugee Board calls attention to the Board's efforts to bring Jews and other persecuted persons out of German controlled territory in as large numbers as possible. The Board urges that Intercross, through appropriate approaches to the German and other authorities in German controlled territory and through any other means possible, do what it can to assist the departure of these persecuted peoples to neutral countries.

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

The Board.....

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

The Board is cognizant of unceasing efforts of Intercross in the direction of making this general program a reality and is appreciative of the humanitarian activities of Intercross. The Board is ready to assist Intercross in every way to effectuate the realization of all of the foregoing UNQUOTE

Following for Harrison.

War Refugee Board considers the proposed approaches to the German and other authorities through Intercross are of utmost importance to the success of its program. In view of recent military developments, including the reported situation in Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania, the Board is convinced that special emphasis should be placed on efforts to persuade the Germans to improve the condition of Jews and other similar groups within occupied territories. Accordingly, you are requested to do everything possible to support the proposals being made to Intercross. If at any time you believe that the Swiss Government would be willing to make similar approaches to the Germans or otherwise assist in the program outlined herein, you are authorized informally to make a request for such action to the Swiss on behalf of this Government.

NULL

cc: Sec'y, Abrahamson, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Pollak, Raine, Sargent, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Pehle, Files.

APR 21 1944

Dear Mr. Peter:

Mr. Ira Hirschmann, the War Refugee Board's Special Representative in Turkey, who has just arrived in Washington from Ankara, has spoken in such glowing terms of the work of your Turkish representative, Mr. Gilbert Simond, that I feel impelled to express our appreciation for the assistance given by Mr. Simond to the Board. Mr. Simond cooperated wholeheartedly and enthusiastically with Ambassador Steinhardt and Mr. Hirschmann in their efforts to facilitate the rescue of refugees. His vast experience in refugee matters was invaluable to them, as was his sympathy, imagination and, above all, his tact.

I should appreciate your conveying to President Huber the thanks of myself and the Board for all that Mr. Simond has done to further our work.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Marc Peter,
Delegate,
International Committee of the
Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America,
1645 Connecticut Avenue, N. W.,
Washington 9, D. C.

MYM JBJ
MYMarks:lsk 4/21/44

Comp with other agencies - Int. Red Cross

Red Cross

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Red Cross Committee
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

2500 Que Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Réf. S/2/h
April 20, 1944

MEMORANDUM

To: WAR REFUGEE BOARD
c/o Mr. Paul S. Mc. Cormick
room 387 1/2
Treasury Building
Washington D. C.

For your information I am herewith enclosing a copy of a cable we have received from the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva concerning

no. 931, total strength in CI camps Libenau, Tittmoning, Compiègne, Vittel (American CI)

Marc Peter

THE DELEGATE IN THE UNITED STATES
of the
INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

COPY OF INCOMING CABLEGRAM:

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

DELEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Réf. S/2/h

Date: 14 avril, 16.45
Date received: 17 avril, 1944

Cablegram received from: Intercroixrouge
Genève, Suisse

931 VOTRE 783 EFFECTIFS LIBENAU 176 31 JANVIER TITTMONING 303 6 MARS COMPIEGNE 329 4 MARS VITTEL 323 29 FEVRIER TOUS USA

INTERCROIXROUGE B9940

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE April 18, 1944

TO Miss Hodel

FROM Mr. McCormack

Mr. Zollinger, Delegate of the ICRC, with whom I spoke this morning, said that the Joint Relief Commission, in clearing with the American and British Ministries in Bern on all relief projects for enemy and enemy-occupied countries, is attempting to avoid receiving "acrimonious notes from the MEW", as was their experience recently.

Zollinger, suggested that if WRB were to advise Intercross that, when they were in receipt of funds made available by United States Treasury license, there was no need to make this clearance, the ICRC "would be more than happy to comply".

AJM

WRB Refugee Bd
Mr Pehle
1 copy only
File

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Bern

FOR: The Secretary of State, Washington

DATE: April 13, 1944

NUMBER: 2312

CONTROL COPY

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

The following message is the substance of a reply to the request contained in your number 1023 dated March 27, and from President Huber of the International Red Cross Committee:

In order to give it more efficacy the International Committee has as a matter of fact concerned itself for some time in enlarging its delegation at Budapest. For the time being it has not considered sending to Hungary a special delegation with instructions to assume the particular protection to which the State Department's message referred since under the present circumstances such mission might be considered as unrelated to the committee's traditional and conventional competence. The International Committee shall continue to devote its entire attention to all categories of war victims as it has in the past without intruding into the domestic policy of any of those states and the War Refugee Board as well as all the humanitarian and government institutions of several belligerent states can rest assured of this. Within full scope which circumstances demand and according to means placed at its disposal it shall always attempt to broaden and increase its action along its own line of activities in favor of these victims.

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

HARRISON

DGR:MPL
4/13/44

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Red Cross

DATE April 3, 1944

TO Mr. Akzin

FROM Mr. McCormack

Failing to secure any results from my visit to American National Red Cross on behalf of civ-ternees in Compiegne, Tittmoning, Liebenau, Bergau and Belsen-Bergen, I called on Mark Peter, delegate of the International Red Cross Committee in the United States. Mr. Peter is cabling the International Red Cross Committee and will secure for us a register of the internees at Vittel, Compiegne, Tittmoning, and Liebenau, and an indication of their nationality. Mr. Peter indicated that Bergau and Belsen-Bergen were staging camps or reception centers, and therefore for practical purposes were comparable to con-centration camps. He knew that International Red Cross Committee did not have a register on persons confined at either camp by name and felt that our purposes with respect to these camps would be better served by awaiting International Red Cross' answer on ~~their~~ our cable to that body in behalf of unassimilated persons.

(3)

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
DELEGATION TO THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W., Washington 9, D. C.

March 31, 1944
Ref.S/2/h

My dear Mr. Mc. Cormick:

I am sending you herewith the copy of the Note from Geneva you asked me for, concerning the situation of Jews in Europe.

Believe me, my dear Mr. Mc.Cormick,

yours sincerely:

Marc Peter

MARC PETER
Delegate of the International
Committee of the Red Cross

AL
1 copy

Mr. Paul S. Mc. Cormick
Room 387 1/2
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington D. C.

COPIE

Genève, le 20 décembre, 1943
note no. 723.

N O T E
POUR LA DÉLEGATION DU COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE
WASHINGTON

CONCERNE: Situation des israélites en Europe:
(votre note no. 412 du 25/10/43)

Nous avons pris connaissance avec un très vif intérêt de votre note ci-dessus mentionnée et de ses annexes. Il ressort de ces textes que, dans l'opinion du Président de la Croix Rouge Américaine, le CICR ne semble pas être l'organisme qualifié pour venir en aide à ces malheureuses victimes de la guerre, tandis que le Dr. S. Z. Kantor estime que notre activité devrait être considérablement développée dans ce sens.

Pour le cas où vous désiriez répondre à ces deux personnalités, - ce que nous laissons à votre libre appréciation - nous nous permettons de vous rappeler brièvement l'attitude du CICR en face du problème de l'aide aux israélites.

Vous savez certainement déjà que notre activité en faveur des populations juives victimes dela guerre est dépourvue de bases juridiques ou conventionnelles. L'Allemagne en particulier considère le problème israélite comme relevant exclusivement de sa politique intérieure. Le CICR a dû constater qu'en insistant pour s'occuper "de droit" de ces personnes, il risquait de diminuer ses chances d'obtenir et d'étendre les résultats pratiques auxquels il est déjà partiellement parvenu, comme cela est exposé ci-après:

C'est en nous fondant sur des motifs purement humanitaires que nous avons pu jusqu'à maintenant arriver à certaines réalisations, notamment dans le domaine des envois de secours - surtout des vivres et médicaments. Nos précédentes lettres vous ont indiqué le détail de ces envois de secours, comme aussi les possibilités d'action qui s'offrent à nous dans les différents pays européens.

De plus, ils vous intéressera sans doute de savoir que nous avons eu récemment la preuve que tous les colis expédiés par nous à titre d'essai - donc en nombre encore restreint -

./.

au camp d'israélites de Theresienstadt (Bohème-Moravie) sont arrivés à destination en parfait état, ainsi d'ailleurs que les envois individuels venant du Portugal et transmis à Theresienstadt.

Ces résultats très encourageants, comme, d'autre part, les facilités qui nous ont été accordées dans d'autres pays de l'Axe, laissent espérer que notre action en faveur des israélites victimes de la guerre est susceptible de se développer encore au fur et à mesure que les circonstances le permettent.

Il convient de relever toutefois que les difficultés que nous rencontrons ne sont pas toujours le fait des Puissances de l'Axe. Ainsi que nous vous l'avons déjà indiqué, nous ne pouvons entreprendre de pareilles actions de secours que si les sommes nécessaires sont mises à notre disposition. Or les autorités tant américaines que britanniques du Blocus se sont jusqu'à maintenant opposées à tout transfert d'argent.

Nous espérons cependant que l'action envisagée par le Comité intergouvernemental pour les Réfugiés à Londres sera de nature à faciliter notre tâche, en contribuant à obtenir des autorités compétentes un assouplissement des règles du blocus.

Il y a enfin un dernier point sur lequel nous aimerions revenir. Dans sa lettre du 29 juillet 1943 à M. Cordell Hull, le Dr, S. Z. Kantor exprime l'avis que le CICR devrait renseigner l'opinion mondiale sur l'oeuvre qu'il a entreprise en faveur des israélites, et sur les obstacles qu'il rencontre. L'expérience nous donne, au contraire, lieu de craindre qu'une telle publicité, soulignant exagérément les résultats que nous avons obtenus jusqu'à présent, modifie peut-être les dispositions des autorités détentrices, c'est-à-dire compromette finalement le développement de cette activité bienfaisante.

A ce propos, nous avons regretté que le CICR ait été nommé publiquement - selon des informations de presse - par M. le Secrétaire d'Etat Breckinridge Long, devant la Commission des Affaires Etrangères de la Chambre des Représentants. (Voir à ce sujet la coupure de presse ci-jointe.) Le but recherché ne peut être atteint, à notre avis, qu'en évitant toute publicité et nous croyons savoir que tous les intéressés se sont ralliés à cette opinion. En effet, la mention, dans la presse, de l'activité exercée par le CICR en faveur des Juifs risquerait peut-être d'entraver les possibilités d'intervention, déjà très restreintes en Allemagne et dans les pays occupés par elle. Il en serait évidemment de même pour les protestations que certaines personnes nous demandent parfois d'adresser à ces autorités détentrices. Il est bien évident qu'il faut procéder, en cette

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matière avec toute la mesure et la discrétion possibles, afin qu'une action qui d'ailleurs n'est nullement clandestine, ne provoque pas, si on lui donne trop d'évidence, des réactions peut-être défavorables de la part des autorités de la bonne volonté desquelles cette action dépend en définitive.

x x x

War Refugee Bd
Mr Pehle
1 Copy only
file

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON

TO: AMEEGATION, BERN

DATED: MARCH 27, 1944

NUMBER: 1023

CONTROL COPY

[redacted]

FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD TO HARRISON.

Please deliver the following message to the International Red Cross, Geneva, from War Refugee Board:

"In view of German occupation of Hungary, War Refugee Board urges that Intercross send effective representation to Hungary in order to protect the well being of groups facing persecution."

HULL

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

March 25, 1944
3:30 p.m.

TO: Mr. Warren

FROM: J. W. Pehle

It will be appreciated if you will have the attached cable despatched at once to Minister Harrison, Bern, for the International Red Cross, Geneva.

Attachment.

P.S.L. JCD
FM:LAb 3/25/44

CABLE TO HARRISON FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Please deliver following message to the International Red Cross, Geneva, from War Refugee Board:

"In view of German occupation of Hungary, War Refugee Board urges that Intercross send effective representation to Hungary in order to protect the well being of groups facing persecution"

JH L.S.L. pro

MEMORANDUM

March 23, 1944
4:50 p.m.

TO: MR. WARREN

FROM: MR. PEHLE

It will be appreciated if you will have the attached telegram from the War Refugee Board to Minister Harrison in Bern dispatched at once.

B.Akzin
PJMcCormack:ia 3/23/44

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON, BERNE, SWITZERLAND, FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

The War Refugee Board requests that you deliver the following message to Intercross:

Message begins: The President of the United States recently instructed the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War to take action for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution. The Executive Order establishing the War Refugee Board declared QUOTE It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war UNQUOTE. The President stressed that it was urgent that action be taken to forestall the plot of the Nazis to exterminate the Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe.

On March 24 the President issued a forceful statement which reaffirmed the determination of the United States Government to punish those guilty of acts of savagery against the Jews and other oppressed peoples, and again made clear that this Government would do what it can to save them. The President stated that we would find havens of refuge for these people and would assure them maintenance and support. He called upon all peoples to cooperate.

Intercross as well as the War Refugee Board realize the fate of groups singled out for extermination or oppression by German authorities and exempted from protection of the Geneva Convention is tragic whether they be detained or free but deprived of food, clothing, and all elementary facilities. This concerns particularly Jewish survivors. Accordingly the Board hopes that Intercross will do its utmost to obtain improvement of conditions of these persons in every way possible.

In full agreement with interested American welfare agencies, the War Refugee Board requests Intercross to support this humanitarian endeavor by approaching the German and satellite governments, through appropriate and expedient channels, in order to bring about as a minimum the full or at least partial application of the Geneva Convention and of resolutions of ensuing Intercross conferences to the detained and unassimilated groups of Jews and others with a view to effectuating (1) their complete assimilation with and treatment equal to civilian internees now under the Geneva Convention, or (2) partial assimilation with civilian internees now under Geneva Convention at least to the extent that reception and distribution of packages under Intercross supervision will be permitted.

In addition, the War Refugee Board requests Intercross to make every effort to obtain, wherever possible, for Jews and other victims of Nazi oppression (who though they may not be physically interned in camps have been singled out for persecution) facilities and opportunities to obtain food and other necessities on the basis of equality with the local population out of local resources and through Intercross channels.

The War Refugee Board is determined to do what it can to actually bring Jews and other persecuted persons out of German controlled territory in as large numbers as possible. The Board urges that Intercross, through appropriate approaches to the German and other authorities in Germany controlled territory and through any other means possible, do what it can to assist the departure of these persecuted peoples to neutral countries.

The Board is cognizant of Intercross's unceasing efforts in the direction of making this general program a reality and is appreciative of Intercross's activity in its international humanitarian programs. The Board is ready to assist Intercross in every way to effectuate the realization of all of the foregoing. Message ends.

The War Refugee Board considers that the proposed approaches to the Germans and others through Intercross is of utmost importance to the success of its program. In view of recent military developments, including the reported situation in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania, the Board is convinced that great emphasis should be placed on efforts to persuade the Germans to improve the condition of Jews and other similar groups within occupied territory. Accordingly, you are requested to do everything possible to support the proposals being made to the Intercross. If at any time you consider it desirable that the Swiss Government make similar approaches to the Germans, or otherwise assist in the program outlined herein, you are authorized to make a request for such action to the Swiss on behalf of this Government.

JED PJM
R.S.R.

COPY

G.59/5/B. G.85
JES/HE

March 30th, 1944.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

My dear Mr. Minister,

May I thank you for your letter of March 25th concerning the Turkish steamship "TARI". As you surmise, our delegate in Turkey has suggested that we solicit safe conducts for this ship from all the belligerent governments concerned except Russia, which has been approached through the Soviet Embassy at Ankara.

Our delegate adds that the signing of the contract of charter for this ship is subject to securing all safe conducts, April 10th being the final date.

The safe conducts would also be indispensable - as far as the International Committee of the Red Cross is concerned - for extending to the "TARI" the protection of our Committee which consists in providing her with the Committee's insignia; furthermore, she must be accompanied by a supercharge.

We note with greatest satisfaction that the United States Government would approve any safe conduct which might be issued by the belligerent authorities and we consider this is a further proof of the readiness of the United States authorities to co-operate in a problem which has been deeply concerning the International Committee for months.

Experience of late, however, makes it seem extremely doubtful that the German government will agree to

His Excellency
Mr. Leland Harrison
American Minister,
Legation of the United States
of America,
BERN

copies transmitted from Berne

a safe conduct or will consent at all to the departure of Jewish refugees from any country under its influence. As a matter of fact, we have already asked for a safe conduct concerning the Bulgarian steamer "BELLACITTA". The American, British and German Governments were approached on January 4th through their respective consuls in Geneva, and while the allied powers have agreed, the German government, in spite of several requests, have not answered. A report from our Berlin delegate states that he is unable to pursue the matter further.

Despite this hitherto negative attitude of the German government in the case of the "BELLACITTA", we did not fail to ask on March 24th for a safe conduct for the Turkish steamer "TARI".

We greatly regret that the prospect of obtaining safe conducts for these ships is not at all hopeful and that there seems little hope altogether of putting Jewish emigration from the Balkans into effect on an organised and sound basis. This is all the more regrettable since for months past we have done everything in our power to hasten measures for emigration before it was too late. We shall transmit to you shortly a summary of our efforts in this matter vouching for our untiring endeavours and indicating that if we are forced to consider the present situation as too advanced to give any tangible result, it is not for lack of good will on our part.

* * *

May I fully endorse on this occasion M. de Schwarzenberg's letter to Mr. Daniel Reagan of March 27th, in which we asked the American Legation kindly to intervene with the War Refugee Board in support of our suggestion to have a large stock of parcels of food and underwear sent over to Geneva where they would be drawn upon only with the consent of the War Refugee Board's representative. This scheme would enable relief to be rushed to war victims whom the War Refugee Board wished to assist in Europe. The constant changes in the general situation make it in fact advisable, in our opinion, not to wait first for a decision as to which category of war victims is to be aided.

Sincerely yours,

Max HUBER
President.

JMG

C O P I E

G 59/ 7
G 59/ 2
G 59/ 4
G 85

Secretaire traitant :

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BERN , March 7, 1944

Dr. J. E. Schwarzenberg
Member of the Secretariat of the
International Committee of the Red Cross
GENEVA

Dear Dr. Schwarzenberg,

I should like to refer to our telephone conversation this morning concerning the relief program you propose to undertake in accordance with the message from the War Refugee Board transmitted to the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Legation's letter of February 11, 1944.

With regard to the use of the equivalent in Swiss francs of the $100.000 made available to the International Committee of the Red Cross by the Joint Distribution Committee in accordance with a Treasury license, the message from the War Refugee Board states :

" You (the Internation Committee of the Red Cross) are authorized under the license to employ the funds for buying food and other supplies in Hungary, Rumania, and neutral countries and otherwise to carry on the relief activities which are mentioned above. "

The Legation interprets this statement to mean that the International Committee of the Red Cross requires no further authorization to proceed with the relief program in question.

Very truly yours,

DANIEL J. REAGAN
Commercial Attache.

C
O
P
Y

March 27th, 1944.

C. 59/2 2A/00

Dear Mr. Reagan,

The latest events in Hungary and the rumours about a possible occupation of Slovakia and Rumania will of necessity influence considerably the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross on behalf of war victims in those parts of Europe. Moreover, the last possibilities of securing foodstuffs in noteworthy quantities within Europe seem to be dwindling away. The Commission Mixte will inform you of these growing difficulties in purchasing, and that certain adjustments will have to be made as far as the Joint's 100.000-dollar scheme is concerned.

We are sure that the War Refugee Board will agree with us when we say that rapid action is essential if the United States Government's intention of rescuing certain particularly stricken groups of refugees is to be put into effect. The latest events have shown once more that what would have still been feasible a few months ago has now been rendered impossible because action has come too late.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has experienced this over and over again during this war, and that is the reason why we so very strongly urge the necessity of accepting our suggestion to send us as rapidly as possible a considerable stock of parcels of food and underwear. As we have suggested, we would hold these in reserve in Geneva and we would draw upon them according to requirements, but only after having contacted the War Refugee Board's representative at Bern to whom we would supply all information and control vouchers he may desire.

Mr. Daniel J. Reagan
Commercial Attache
Legation of the United States of America
B E R N

It is with the prospect in view that the situation of refugees may become still worse in Europe and that nothing ought to be left undone to save human lives -- we again point out the necessity of helping detainees in concentration camps and particularly children in certain parts of Europe-- that we ask the American Legation to support our scheme, providing it agrees with it, and to lay particular stress on speedy action. By suggesting that we put before the Legation all material it may desire, we believe that we have taken into due account the reserves which the Economic Warfare sight make towards our activities.

Thankkng you in advance, dear Mr. Reagan, for all the trouble you are taking in this matter, we are

yours sincerely,

/s/ J.E.Schwarzenberg

MD

COPIE

G 59/5/B
G 59/7
G 85

Personne suivant l'affaire :

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bern, March 25, 1944

My dear Mr. President,

I have just received telegraphic information from the Department of State, dated March 23, 1944, to the effect that the steamship TARI, a 4.000 ton vessel, which belongs to the Government of Turkey and is lying at present at Istanbul, is being made available for the purpose of evacuating Jewish refugees to Istanbul from Constanza.

The Department of state has further informed me that your representative in Turkey has sent a telegram to you as king that you endeavor to obtain safe conduct from all the belligerent countries for the vessel, with the exception of the Soviet Union, which I understand has been approached for the purpose through the Soviet Ambassador at Ankara.

The Department of State asks me to inform the International Red Cross that the Government of the United States concurs in such safe conduct as may be agreed to by the British Government for the movement of the steamship TARI for the purpose indicated in the foregoing.

For your information, it may also be stated that the Government of Switzerland has been appropriately advised by the Legation in the premises.

Sincerely yours,

(s).....

The honorable
Max Huber, President C.I.C.R.
Geneve

G 59/2
G 85
FES/HL

COPIE

March 24th, 1944

Mr. Daniel J. REAGAN
Commercial Attache
Legation of the United States of America
B E R N

Dear Mr. Reagan,

Many thanks for your letter of March 22nd, 1944, by which you were kind enough to transmit to us a message from the War Refugee Board concerning the Joint's opinion on the utilisation of $ 100,000. We have seen Mr. Saly Mayer and are in agreement with him.

On the other hand, events in the Balkans have developed recently in a way which necessarily must change our entire plan of action. As a matter of fact, I don't see how we shall be able to get any more foodstuffs out of Hungary now. I shall write to you this subject in a few days.

Sincerely yours,

J.W. Schwarzenberg

COPY

G.59/2 - G.65 -
JES/AU

March 23, 1944

Mr. Daniel J. Reagan
Commercial Attache
Legation of the
United States of America
B e r n e

Dear Mr. Reagan,

Do you think you could ask for the support of the War Refugee Board in the following matter?

In view of the growing difficulties of purchasing foodstuffs in Central Europe - and these will be considerably increased by present events in Hungary - we have endeavoured to obtain information as to purchasing possibly in certain countries which are farther distant. We hear that certain food products might be found in Portugal. As a matter of fact, the Blockade authorities give permission to transfer funds from overseas more easily when these are to be devoted to purchases in neutral countries. The Jewish organisations would be able to make funds available for our use forthwith in Portugal with the object of supply food to certain Jewish groups who were not included in our scheme of 29 February. We should, as an example, like to send foodstuffs to Jews who are interned in three camps in Croatia and who, according to reports received from our Delegate in Zagreb, are in an extremely precarious condition as regards food.

The following difficulty, however, arises: railroad transportation from Portugal is very expensive and, moreover, fairly uncertain because of the railroad situation in Spain. For these reasons, the International Committee of the Red Cross were led to initiate a shipping line between Lisbon and Marseilles to convey the large cargoes of parcels for

American and British prisoners of war in Germany. These ships are, however, allowed to carry only goods for which the Blockade authorities have issued navicerts.

Hitherto we have never been able to obtain navicerts for shipments intended for the categories of persons, including Jews, whom we hope to be able to help within the sphere of the scheme which has now been started thanks to the support of the War Refugee Board.

We should therefore be extremely grateful if you could approach the War Refugee Board with the object of finding out whether they could secure navicerts from the Blockade authorities which would enable the goods intended for the goups of persons indicated in our letter of 29 February to be shipped on board the International Committee's ships from Lisbon to Marseilles.

With many thanks in advance for your kindness in this matter and as the question appears to be an urgent one, we should be most grateful for an answer as quickly as may be. Copy of this letter is forwarded to our delegate in Washington.

We are, dear Mr. Reagan,

Yours sincerely,

(J. E. Schwarzenberg)

P.S.-Referring to your kind letter of March 18th, par. 3, I may add that my letter of March 13th has been forwarded to our Washington delegation with instructions to contact the War Refugee Board.

COPY

YJ.

G.59/2
G.85
M.Bachmann

Personne responsable: M. P. KUHNE

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bern, March 18, 1944

Dr. J. E. de Schwarzenberg,
Member of the Secretariat of the
International Committee of the Red Cross,
Palais du Conseil-General,
Geneva.

Dear Dr. de Schwarzenberg:

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of March 13, 1944, concerning your discussions with Mr. Saly Mayer of the relief program to be undertaken with the funds which have been made available to the International Committee of the Red Cross by the Joint Distribution Committee.

I was pleased to note that with the exception of certain minor changes which you are able to effect, Mr. Mayer agreed with your program for the expenditure of these funds.

I believe that your letter would be of interest to the War Refugee Board and wonder if it would be possible for you to forward it to the United States as was done with the International Committee's letter of February 29, 1944 ?

Washington is, of course, very interested in the execution of the relief program and it would be much appreciated if you could inform me of any developments which have taken place since your letter of March 13.

I am very sorry to have missed you during my brief visit to Geneva this week but hope to see you soon either here or in Geneva.

Very truly yours,

(S) Daniel J. Reagan,

Commercial Attache

C O P Y

JJD

G.59/2
G.85

Secretaire traitant : Mr. SCHWARZENBERG

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BERN, March 22, 1944.

Dr. J. de Schwarzenberg
Member of the Secretariat of the
International Committee of the Red Cross.
Geneva.

Dear Dr. de Schwarzenberg,

Reference is made to paragraph 2 of your letter of February 29, 1944, and to the Legation's letter of March 7, 1944, concerning the authority of the International Committee of the Red Cross to administer the expenditure of the Swiss franc equivalent of the $ 100,000 for relief purposes made available to the International Committee by the Joint Distribution Committee.

In this connection, the Legation has been requested to deliver to the International Committee the following message from the War Refugee Board:

"With reference to your letter of February 29, No. 199, addressed to the American Legation at Bern, with regard to the equivalent of $ 100,000 in Swiss francs received from the Joint Distribution Committee: The Joint Distribution Committee has informed the War Refugee Board that full discretion with regard to the use of the funds under reference has been placed in the International Red Cross but the Joint Distribution Committee hopes that the International Red Cross will, after consultation with Saly Mayer, coordinate the proposals set forth in the letter of February 29 with the feeding program at present being carried out in Turkey and with the work which is being done with Saly Mayer. The Joint Distribution Committee assures the International Red Cross that no exploitation for purposes of propaganda will be made of this relief action."

You will note that this message confirms the interpretation of the original instructions which was made in the Legation's letter of March 7.

Very truly yours,

(S) Daniel J. REAGAN,
Commercial Attache.

COPY

G.59/2 G.85
JES/HS

March 13th, 1944.

Dear Mr. Reagan,

I believe it may be useful to inform you of a long visit we had from Mr. Saly Mayer, the representative of the "Joint" in Switzerland.

Mr. Saly Mayer, interpreting, as we assume, the opinion of his organization, seems to have expected that the International Committee of the Red Cross would utilize the sums transferred through the kind offices of the War Refugee Board not solely for relief activity. Mr. Mayer hoped that we would request the transfer of far greater sums and utilize them primarily for what he calls "saving of lives".

We pointed out that the International Committee of the Red Cross could not contemplate the possibility of partaking in certain actions with the object of getting Jews out of Axis countries, such actions necessitating methods which are not considered legal by the detaining authorities. Being fully aware of the humanitarian aim of this type of activity - and in this case the means would seem to justify the end - the International Committee of the Red Cross, considering its manifold other activities which are based on the confidence of all governments concerned, cannot launch into a new field of activity where it would sooner or later come into conflict with the detaining powers. This would be contrary to its interests and to its traditions of absolute neutrality. We believe that Mr. Saly Mayer understood our point of view, and the fact that we have to discriminate between the vast activities which are the province of the various Jewish organizations, and the narrow limits within which the International Committee of the Red Cross is able to offer its services without jeopardizing the task which develves upon it as a result of tradition and the Geneva Conventions.

Mr. Daniel J. Reagan
Commercial Attache of the
Legation of the United States of America
BERN

For these reasons the International Committee has decided to limit it work in favour of the Jews and other persecuted groups of civilians in Europe to relief work, building up of a Central-Card-Index for Dispersed Families and a certain limited co-operation in the emigration problem.

The latter consists in helping to procure tonnage and to protect ships which might transport Jews from Rumanian or Bulgarian ports to Palestine. We shall probably have to reduce our work in this case to protection of the ships (asking the belligerents for safe-conducts), all the more so as the British authorities prefer to pass through the channel of the Protecting Powers in all questions concerning emigration.

We have, however, asked Mr. Mayer to make practical suggestions as to what, in his opinion, the International Committee of the Red Cross could do for Jews in addition to the above-mentioned points. We shall be glad to examine his suggestions and see whether we can discover a means of rendering assistance.

Concerning the utilization of the 100.000 dollars, Mr. Saly Mayer seems to approve our plan except for certain minor changes which could be easily made. His main objection however is that this action is put on too modest a basis and that we ought to ask for higher contributions.

This is however for the War Refugee Board to decide. If we have been reluctant to embark upon a large-scale plan, it is partly because we do not know exactly how far and in what way the War Refugee Board wishes us to proceed. The proposals contained in our letter of February-29th aim, by the way, at an amplification of our activity; especially our scheme of having a large stock of parcels in Switzerland under control of the War Refugee Board, opens the door, in our opinion, to relief on a far larger scale.

We fell we have indicated to the War Refugee Board - and this we explained to Mr. Mayer - where and how the International Committee of the Red Cross could be entrusted with the continuation and enlargement of a scheme which might lead to a really effective relief action on behalf of certain groups of persecuted civilians in Europe. And relief in the case of Jews and the other categories mentioned in our letter of February 29th is, in our opinion, a means too - if somewhat different - of "saving lives".

Sincerely yours,

J. E. Schwarzenberg

SP

COPIE

G.59/2
G.59/7
G.85

Secretaire traitant:

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BERN, 11.3.1944.

I. R. C. C.
Palais du Conseil General,
Geneva

Dear Sirs,

I wish to thank you for your letter of March 10, 1944 (ref. G.59/2 G.59/7 G.85 PK/AP), in reply to the Legation's letter of March 7 concerning the remittance of funds for the Service Social d'Aide aux Emigrants.

The Legation has transmitted by telegram to the War Refugee Board the substance of your reply and your suggestion that the funds in question be remitted directly to the Service Social d'Aide aux Emigrants. I shall not fail to inform you when the Legation receives further information concerning this matter.

Very truly yours,

(S) Daniel J. Reagan,
Commercial Attache.

YA. COPIE G.59/2
G.59/7
G.85
Tresorerie

Secretaire traitant :

LEGATION OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA

The Honorable Max Huber, President
International Committee of the Red Cross
Geneva

Sir :

I have the honor to inform you that the Legation has been requested by the Department of State to inform the International Committee of the Red Cross that the Department, the Treasury, and the War Refugee Board have approved the operations covered by the license described in the following message :

" The Treasury Department has issued a license to the International Rescue and Relief Committee, New York, which permits the remittance, through the Banque Nationale Suisse, Zurich, of the equivalent in Swiss francs of $ 7,500 monthly for six months to the International Red Cross for the relief of Spanish refugees now located in camps in southern France, this amount for transmittal to the Service Sociale d'Aide aux Emigrants."

It would be appreciated if you would inform the Legation of the precise identity of the Service Sociale d'Aide aux Emigrants and of the activities which it is proposed to finance with the funds made available by the International Rescue and Relief Committee.

Very truly yours,
for the Minister

(S) Daniel J. Reagan,
Commercial attache.

G 59/2
G 59/7

March 7th, 1944

Mr. Daniel Reagan
Commercial Attache
Legation of the United States of America
BERN

Dear Mr. Reagan,

May I thank you for your letter of March 3rd and for the information you were kind enough to give me by telephone in the subject of the War Refugee Board's action in favour of Jews.

We are sending on our letter of February 29th, ref. G 59/2 G 85, to Mr. Peter, our delegate in the United States, with a copy for transmission to the War Refugee Board.

Answering to your question contained in the last paragraph of your letter, the "Service Pharmaceutique" of our Committee gives the following information:

The 4 pharmaceutical products designated as Assortiment B are actually at the Port Franc Cornavin in Geneva and are of foreign origin, i.e.

insulin - Canada or Denmark
mercurochrome - France
dextrosum - Hungary
perhepar - Hungary

Sincerely yours,

J. E. Schwarzenberg

YJ.

Personne responsable:

C
O
P
Y

G.59/7
G.59/2
G.59/4
G.85

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bern, March 3, 1944.

Dr. Carl J. Burckhardt,
Member of the International Committee
of the Red Cross,
Palais du Conseil General
Geneva

Dear Dr. Burckhardt:

I wish to acknowledge on behalf of the Legation the receipt of your letter of February 29, 1944, in reply to the Legation's letters of January 29 and February 11 which transmitted to the International Committee of the Red Cross messages from the War Refugee Board.

A summary of the proposals for relief action contained in your letter is being telegraphed to the Department of State, Washington, D. C., for transmission to the War Refugee Board and the Legation will not fail to inform you as soon as further word is received from Washington.

May I express the Legation's appreciation for the promptness and completeness with which the International Committee of the Red Cross has supplied the information requested by the War Refugee Board.

Very truly yours,

(S) Daniel J. Reagan,

Commercial Attache.

MD

C
O
P
Y

G 59/7
G 59/2
G 85

Secretaire traitant:

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

Bern, February 21, 1944.

The Honorable
Max Huber
President International Committee
of the Red Cross
Geneva.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of February 17th, file No. G.59/7 G.59/2 G.85 JES/HL, inresponse to my letters of January 29th and February 11th last, and take pleasure to inform you that I have not failed to convey your message as requested to the War Refugee Board.

In reply to the inquiry contained in the last paragraph of your letter under acknowledgment, I am happy to name Mr.Daniel J. Reagan Commercial Attache of the Legation, for such informal consultation as suggested by you.

Very truly yours,

(s) Leland Harrison
American Minister.

G. 59/7 G.59/2 G.85
JES/HL

February 17th, 1944.

Sir,

The message from the War Refugee Board of the Government of the United States of America, which you were so kind as to forward us on 29 January, and relating to the possible transfer of relief in cash, was for us a matter of special satisfaction since for several months past our most earnest concern has been to draw the attention of Allied Authorities to the almost tragic condition of various categories of civilians in Europe.

Subsequently the Legation of the United States of America has been good enough, in a letter of 11 February, to inform us of the transmission of USA $100.000.- for the purpose of purchasing foodstuffs and other relief without the relevant license containing any geographical restriction concerning the utilisation of this sum.

We should be very much obliged to the Legation of the United States of America if it would be so kind as to convey to the War Refugee Board the expression of our deep gratitude for this proof of confidence and the assurance that, on our side, we shall do everything in our power, in close co-operation with the Joint Relief Commission and taking into account the wishes of the donors, to draw up a programme of relief action which will be submitted to the War Refugee Board in the near future.

We shall not fail to make in due course further suggestions of a practical character concerning the development of this action and the initiation of other similar operations. In this connection we should much

His Excellency
Mr. Leland Harrison
American Minister
Legation of the United States
of America,
BERNE

0 0 3 0

appreciate if the Legation of the United States of America could indicate the name of a member of its staff with whom we could get into touch in the future with a view to mutual consultation as to the expediency of any given proposal.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

very truly yours,

Max HUBER
President.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

Friedman

File

DATE

TO Mr. Friedman

March 16, 1944

FROM Paul J. McCormack

Realizing the Board's decision to contact International Red Cross Committee with respect to the proposals (1) assimilation of detained civilians, or (2) release of detained unassimilated civilians, or (2a) children under 12, women, and the aged, or (3) the expansion of the existing limited 2½ kilos package program, contacts were made with American National Red Cross, George L. Warren, International Red Cross Committee Delegation in the United States, and Bernard Guffler, Assistant Chief, Special War Problems Division, State Department.

AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS:

In an informal conversation with Mr. Philip Ryan, Director of Civilian Relief, discussing the above mentioned proposals, Mr. Ryan indicated that while his organization had some reservations about point (1) they were sympathetic to the other two proposals, and that if the Board approached the International Red Cross Committee with these proposals, the American National Red Cross, through its delegate in Geneva, Mr. Francis James, would add its support to the Board's proposals.

MR. GEORGE L. WARREN:

Informal conversation was likewise had with George L. Warren on these specific proposals with a view to obtaining the State Department file containing the formal exchange of diplomatic notes between this Government and the German Government, through the medium of their protective power, for the purpose of obtaining information as to the exact language in which these notes were couched, since the German Government as a result of this exchange, agreed to apply the Geneva Convention to civilian American nationals. Mr. Warren was completely sympathetic to the proposal and said that it would be necessary for me to see Mr. Bernard Guffler, Assistant Chief of Special War Problems Division, who had specific responsibility for prisoners of war. Mr. Warren further indicated that he felt reasonably sure that if the International Red Cross Committee was able to report any significant favorable reaction on the part of the German Government and other governments to these specific proposals, that the

State Department would be willing if the Board so requested, to make official diplomatic representations in the same direction to the same end.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE DELEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES:

Contact was made with Madam Suzanne Ferriere, and Messrs. Zollinger and Peter on the above mentioned proposals. Madam Ferriere indicated at the outset that the Delegation in the United States would support the Board in this venture. She emphasized the fact that such representation on the part of the International Committee were unofficial as opposed to diplomatic, and had actually been going on continuously on behalf of the unassimilated detained groups since the outbreak of the war, and that this venture on the part of the Board probably represented the first instance in which a governmental agency had ever approached the International Red Cross Committee with such a proposal.

BERNARD GUFFLER, ASSISTANT CHIEF, SPECIAL WAR PROBLEM DIVISION, STATE DEPT.:

Mr. Guffler was unimpressed by this proposal and likewise since the governmental exchange of notes as applying only to American nationals in German hands was not exactly analogous to the group in which the Board is interested, Mr. Guffler did not feel that there was any value in making the file available. He did however summarize the content of the exchange of notes. That is, (1) our Government made representations to the German Government that without reciprocity we would apply the Geneva Convention to German nationals in American hands; (2) the German Government replied that they would not intern American nationals but would hold American nationals in protective custody for exchange; (3) our Government in replying indicated that exchange involved considerable delay and therefore requested that the Geneva Convention apply to these civilians; and (4) the German Government agreed to these details.

The representatives of the American National Red Cross and the International Red Cross Committee Delegates made the request that before the Board dispatched its cable to the International Red Cross Committee requesting action on the part of the Committee with respect to these proposals that they be consulted, so that having the advantage of the content of our cable to the Committee they would be in a better position to give support to our proposals.

PJM

March 14, 1944

: Mr. L.C. Aarons through M. J.B. Friedman

: Joseph H. Murphy

Re : Remittances by International Red Cross

Somehow or other this got into the WRB hopper although it appears to be a FFC matter. The following appear from the attached file:

A. Sometime ago we had evidence that the IRC was (1) offering its facilities to various National Red Cross societies of the Western Hemisphere for the transmission of funds from Western Hemisphere to enemy territory: (2) that it was, in some cases, doing the same for individuals; and (3) that it wished to transmit funds from enemy territory for the financial assistance of persons in the Western Hemisphere. The United States and the British both protested, urging IRC to withdraw offers of its facilities to National Societies and refrain from permitting the use of its facilities except for approved transfers on behalf and at the request of governments--e.g. payments to POW's and civilian internees in the Far East.

B. On December 1943, IRC replied to our protests asking for a conference at Bern with British and ourselves. It also pointed out: (1) It doesn't solicit offers from national societies, but acts only when requested to and then on the assumption that the requests of the national societies have been approved by their governments. Hence it has no offers to withdraw; (2) With certain allegedly isolated and purely accidental exceptions, when individuals request transfer of funds, they are referred to their obligation to comply with national laws. IRC stressed humanitarian need and said it would not exercise pressure on national societies. It did indicate that, if pressed to do so, it would tell national societies that future transfers would not be made, except through intermediary governments concerned.

C. The State Department now proposes the following: (1) Except for approved transfers at the request of governments, the IRC advise national societies that its channels are no longer available to transmit funds between territories of opposing belligerents; (2) Article 38 of the Geneva Convention of July 27, 1929, relative to POW's doesn't affect right of detaining power to control reception of funds, nor does it affect domestic laws, etc. on transfer of funds (this point was made by IRC); (3) Certain emergency transfers might be the subjects of further consideration in cases where specific needs had to be met. State also concurs with request for conference. In the attached draft, FFC concurs with this message.

I understand that FFC has recently held a conference with State and others on POW remittances. I recommend that this be returned to FFC, and insofar as WRB is concerned, I see no objection to the letter in question.

JHMurphy:dh 3/14/44 flm

Switzerland

CONTROL COPY

War Refugee Bd. (Mr. Pehle)

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern

TO: Secretary of State, Washington

DATED: February 18, 1944

NUMBER: 1028

[redacted]

Stating that the message from the War Refugee Board (your 279, January 27) was a matter of special satisfaction since for several months past their most earnest concern has been to draw attention of the Allied authorities to the almost tragic condition of various categories of civilians in Europe, letter from CICR has now been received.

I have been asked by CICR to convey to the War Refugee Board, after they acknowledge receipt of my letter of February 11, transmitting message contained in your 437, February 9, expression of their deep gratitude for this proof of confidence and the assurance that they would do everything in their power in close cooperation with the Joint Relief Commission and taking into account wishes of the donors to draw up a program of relief action which will be submitted to the Board at an early date. Further suggestions of a practical character concerning the development of this action and the initiation of other similar action will also be made by CICR in due course.

HARRISON

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

MEMORANDUM

January 27, 1944

I read to Mr. Bundy of the War Department at 12:25 P. M. today the cable to the International Red Cross from the War Refugee Board, which I told him had already been sent to State. He commented that the last sentence contained a commitment with regard to funds and I told him I understood there were private funds available. He said he would report the matter to the Secretary of War.

JWS/wlc

FBC-76
(11-42)

CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES
INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

FOR:

Amendment to this License . . . . . ☐

Extension of this License . . . . . ☐

Renewal of this License . . . . . ☐

Correspondence concerning this application . ☐

Other (Specify)

1. FOR MATERIAL RE $100,000 FEEDING PROGRAM

2. FOR MATERIAL RE PURCHASE OF FOOD IN SWITZERLAND TO BE DISTRIBUTED BY RED CROSS TO INTERNEES AT THERESIENSTADT (LICENSE PERMITTING JDC TO REMIT MONEY FOR)

3. FOR MATERIAL RE COOPERATION OF IRC REPRESENTATIVES IN ANKARA AND GENEVA IN OUR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN SAFE CONDUCT FROM ALL BELLIGERENTS IN CONNECTION WITH RESCUE OPERATIONS TO AND THRU' TURKEY

4. FOR MATERIAL RE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN FOR JEWS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF NAZI OPPRESSION, OPPORTUNITIES TO OBTAIN FOOD & OTHER NECESSITIES

SEE: 1. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF & RESCUE OF REFUGEES: RELIEF PROJECTS (RED CROSS AID IN RUMANIA, HUNGARY, SLOVAKIA, CROATIA & THERESIENSTADT)

2. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF & RESCUE OF REFUGEES: RELIEF PROJECTS (RELIEF IN THERESIENSTADT (JDC))

3. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF & RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO & THRU' TURKEY

4. MEASURES DIRECTED TOWARD HALTING PERSECUTION: APPROACHES TO OFFENDING GOVERNMENTS (THE GERMANS)

AUG 11 1945

Dear Mr. Huber:

Through your delegate in Washington, I have just received your letter of May 30, 1945. Your expression of thanks to the Board is greatly appreciated.

I wish to take this opportunity to express to you my personal gratitude for the service your Committee has rendered the Board, particularly in its program to bring relief to the suffering inmates of German concentration camps. I wish also to thank you for the cooperation your Committee has generously given to Mr. McClelland and Mr. Katski in their arduous duties as representatives of the Board in Switzerland. In spite of many obstacles, the Board was able to save and bring relief to many thousands of victims of Nazi oppression in its unique life-saving mission. We are grateful for the part the International Red Cross played in that great undertaking.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Max Huber,
Honorary and Acting President,
International Committee of the
Red Cross,
Geneva, Switzerland.

FH:hd 8/6/45

Comité International
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse
Délégation aux Etats-Unis
d'Amérique

International Committee of the Red Cross
in Geneva, Switzerland
Delegation to the United States
of America

1645 Connecticut Ave. N. W.
Washington 9, D. C.

July 11, 1945

In replying, refer to (S/2/h)

Brigadier General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington D. C.

Sir,

I have the honor of forwarding to you herewith a letter addressed to you by Mr. Max Huber, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, in Geneva.

Believe me, Sir,

yours very truly:

1 letter
AL

CHARLES HUBER
Delegate

GENÈVE, le May 30th, 1945.

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE

AGENCE CENTRALE
DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

Brig. General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington D.C.

Sir,

The conclusion of hostilities in Europe involves obviously a substantial change and reduction in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The relief scheme for what were known as "unassimilated groups", and, in particular, for Jews in Germany and in the occupied territories, which had been undertaken in the face of the greatest obstacles, is drawing to a close. The International Committee therefore consider it an essential duty at the present time to thank the organizations which have been particularly helpful in this welfare work.

The War Refugee Board, which was called into being under the wise and memorable leadership of President Roosevelt, enabled some tens of thousands of the most sorely tried war victims to receive some degree of help, although this was on a modest scale, in comparison to the stupendous needs of the sufferers. According to testimonies received repeatedly from the latter, this help, however, in many cases spelt rescue from death by starvation.

The International Committee would therefore like to thank the War Refugee Board sincerely for the effective and understanding assistance which they have invariably received through Mr. Roswell D. McClelland. The Committee greatly regret that such fruitful cooperation with the War Refugee Board, and in particular with their distinguished representative in Switzerland, should come to an end. Mr. McClelland's resourcefulness and selfless labours have contributed in large measure to the success of the enterprise, and he was latterly very ably seconded by Mr. Katzki.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

Max Huber

Max HUBER
Honorary and Acting President of the
International Committee of the Red Cross

Mit Luftpost
Par avion
Per via aerea

No. 66

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE
GENÈVE

Agence centrale
Prisonniers de Guerre

Brig. General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington D.C.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
DELEGATION TO THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
1645 Connecticut Ave., Washington 9, D. C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 2
JUL 18 730PM
1945

POSTAGE FREE
INFORMATION BUREAU
PRISONERS OF WAR MAIL

Brigadier General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington D. C.

C
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GENEVE, le May 30th, 1945.

COMITE INTERNATIONAL
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE

Brig. General William O'Dwyer
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Washington, D. C.

Sir,

The conclusion of hostilities in Europe involves obviously a substantial change and reduction in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The relief scheme for what were known as "Unassimilated groups", and, in particular, for Jews in Germany and in the occupied territories, which had been undertaken in the face of the greatest obstacles, is drawing to a close. The International Committee therefore consider it an essential duty at the present time to thank the organizations which have been particularly helpful in this welfare work.

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Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

/s/ Max Huber

MAX HUBER
Honorary and Acting President of the
International Committee of the Red Cross

Copy and 100 + one [illegible] the Commission with [illegible] mailed Cat. 7/28/45

3. War Refugee Bd
(Red Cross)
DCR-C
1 incl.

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CONTROL COPY

AMERICAN EMBASSY

London, February 25, 1944

No. 14,087

SUBJECT: Refugee Relief Project Through International Red Cross.

3 & WRB Feb
with 1 copy of translation
1 War Dm. Bundy with 1 copy of translation

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's telegram no. 1020, February 9, 11 p.m., from the War Refugee Board and to transmit herewith copy of a letter and its enclosures received by the Embassy from the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees in response to the communication to the Director which the Embassy was instructed by the telegram under reference to make.

Respectfully yours,
For the Ambassador:

W. J. Gallman
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure:
1/ Copy of letter from the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, dated 21st February, 1944, reference 171/98 HWE/EMS.

CC:hjs

840.48 REFUGEES/5323

PS/MEL

Enclosure no. 1 to despatch no. 14,087 from the Embassy at London, dated February 25, 1944.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES

Our Ref: 171/98
HWE/EMS

11 D Regent Street,
London, S. W. 1.

21st February, 1944

Dear Mr. Bucknell:

Will you kindly refer to your letter of February 12, 1944, informing me that, on the approval of the War Refugee Board, the United States Treasury had issued appropriate licences to the Joint Distribution Committee to carry out the programme referred to in my letter No. 171/98, of December 7, 1943. I now enclose a copy of a letter dated 16th February, 1944, (with a copy of its enclosure), received from Monsieur Haccius of the London Delegation of the International Red Cross, and a copy of my reply thereto.

I am sending Mr. Randall at the Foreign Office a copy of the correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. Emerson.

Mr. Howard Bucknell, Jr.,
Embassy of the United States of America,
1, Grosvenor Square, W. 1.

Encs. 3.

Copy.

171/98
HWE/EMS

21st February, 1944

Dear Monsieur Haccius,

In reply to your letter of the 16th February, 1944, with which you enclosed a copy of the note dated 5th February, 1944, from the International Red Cross at Geneva, I write to say that we have heard from the United States Embassy in London that the United States Treasury, with the approval of the War Refugee Board, has issued appropriate licences to the Joint Distribution Committee, the effect of which is that the Joint Distribution Committee will make available to the International Red Cross the sum of one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000) for the purpose of carrying out the scheme of assistance to certain groups of Jews in Europe, which has been the subject of discussion between the International Red Cross and the Intergovernmental Committee. We are informed that the licences will cover the purchase of food and other supplies in Roumania and Hungary. I have no doubt that the Joint Distribution Committee will get into early touch with the International Red Cross, if it has not already done so. The relations between the two will be direct and not through the Intergovernmental Committee. It will not, therefore, be necessary for the International Red Cross to render accounts to the Intergovernmental Committee as was provisionally proposed, but I hope that the International Red Cross will keep us informed of the progress of the scheme.

Under this arrangement the difficulty mentioned in the enclosure to your letter, regarding the transfer of money across the blockade, would apparently no longer exist, but I am sending a copy of the correspondence and of this letter to the Foreign Office and to the United States Embassy in London, in case any further action is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) H. W. Emerson.

Monsieur R. A. Haccius,
Comité International de la Croix-Rouge,
London Delegation,
55, Pall Mall, S. W. 1.

Copy

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

Agence Centrale des Prisonniers de Guerre

London Delegation,
55 PallMall, S. W. 1.

16th February, 1944

RAH/MF.

Sir Herbert Emerson, G.C.I.E., K.C.I.E.,
High Commissioner for Refugees,
11D, Regent Street, S. W. 1.

Dear Sir Herbert,

I have just received from Geneva a note which is complementary to the letter addressed to you by the Committee of the 9th December, 1943; this outlines the conditions governing the transfer of funds by the Committee through the blockade. I enclose copy of this note (No. 3980) for your information.

I should be obliged if you would let me know when you obtain any result in your dealings with the M.E.W. regarding the purchase of foodstuffs in Hungary.

My headquarters also wish me to inform you that they are willing to supply you with any further information you may require, and which may not be contained in their letter of the 9th December, 1943.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) R. A. Haccius.

Enclosed copy letter No. 3980.

Copy

COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE.

Genève, 5 janvier, 1944.

Délégation du Comité International
de la Croix-Rouge en Grande-Bretagne.

Concerne: Secours aux Israélites en Europe.

Faisant suite à notre note No. 3971 (JES/HL) du 13 décembre 1943, nous jugeons utile de vous communiquer les informations suivantes:

En date des 29 et 30 novembre 1943, les Gouvernements américain et britannique nous ont fait savoir, par l'intermédiaire de leurs légations à Berne, qu'ils ne désiraient pas que le Comité International de la Croix Rouge procédât à des transmissions d'argent à travers le Blocus, de telles transmissions étant de la compétence exclusive des Puissances Protectrices. Une exception à ce principe serait toutefois admise lorsque, en l'absence de Puissance Protectrice, le Comité International de la Croix Rouge aurait été requis par un Gouvernement de procéder à une telle transmission.

Or, vous savez que notre oeuvre de secours en faveur des Israélites en Europe nécessitera vraisemblablement des transfers d'argent assez considérables. Vous savez également que les intérêts des Israélites dans les pays de l'axe ne sont pas représentés par une Puissance Protectrice, et que le Comité International de la Croix Rouge semble être, pour le moment, le seul intermédiaire capable de les secourir d'une manière efficace.

Nous tenons à préciser et nous espérons que notre lettre du 9 décembre 1943 au Directeur du Comité Intergouvernemental pour les Réfugiés ne sera pas considérée comme une infraction aux règles du Blocus, telles qu'elles viennent de nous être rappelées par les Gouvernements britannique et américain.

En fait - et notre lettre n'était peut-être pas assez explicite sur ce point - si nous avons offert d'entreprendre une action de secours à condition qu'une première somme de 300.000 frs soit mise à notre disposition, il est bien évident que cette offre était conditionnée par l'autorisation formelle des Autorités du Blocus à un tel transfert d'argent.

Nous vous serions donc reconnaissants de bien vouloir porter les informations ci-dessus à la connaissance du Comité Intergouvernemental, en exprimant le désir que ce Comité veuille bien intervenir lui-même auprès des Autorités du Blocus en vue d'obtenir les facilités nécessaires à l'action de secours que nous sommes prêts à entreprendre.

Division des prisonniers internés et civils.

Copy

(TRANSLATION)

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

Geneva, January 5, 1944.

Delegation of the International Red Cross Committee in Great Britain.

Subject: Relief to the Jews in Europe.

Referring to our note no. 3971 (JES/HL) of December 13, 1943, we deem it advisable to send you the following information:

Under date of November 29 and November 30, 1943, the American and British Governments informed us, through their legations in Bern, that they did not wish the International Red Cross Committee to effect the transfer of funds through the Blockade, the Protecting Powers having the sole right to such transfers. Exception to this principle AAO/ ~~might~~ SHAM be made if, in the absence of a Protecting Power, the International Red Cross Committee were required by a Government to make such a transfer.

Now, you know that our work of assistance to Jews in Europe will most likely require the transfer of rather considerable sums of money. You also know that Jewish interests in Axis countries are not represented by a Protecting Power and that the International Red Cross

Committee

Committee appears to be, for the time being, the only intermediary capable of giving them effective aid.

We hope, and we wish to make this clear, that our letter of December 9, 1943 to the Director of the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees will not be considered as an infraction of the Blockade Regulations recently called to our attention by the British and American governments.

In fact--and our letter was perhaps not explicit enough on this point,--when we offered to carry out a scheme of assistance if an initial sum of Frs. 300,000 were put at our disposal, we evidently considered this offer as subject to the formal authorization of the Blockade authorities previous to such a transfer of funds.

We would therefore be grateful to you for transmitting this information to the Inter-governmental Committee, expressing the desire that this Committee itself approach the Blockade authorities as regards to the granting of facilities necessary to the relief project which we are ready to undertake.

Division of prisoners, internees and civilians.

TC-364

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TELEGRAM SENT

NO
This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (RR)

January 27, 1944

11 p.m.

U.S. URGENT

AMERICAN LEGATION

BERN

379

X

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, GENEVA, FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD. We are familiar with the report (contained in your cable 571 of October 13, 1943, to your Washington Delegation) concerning possible feeding programs in Rumania, Theresienstadt, Slovakia and Croatia and the need of funds therefor. We desire immediate information concerning what areas you could operate in right now, assuming that necessary funds are made available to you, to provide food and medicines to Jews and other persecuted groups in German-occupied areas who are denied the facilities available to the rest of the population. Please advise where food, medicines, and other supplies can be purchased and how much money is needed. We are prepared to see that funds are made available at once for necessary operations.

HULL
(AAB)

J. W. PEHLE, TREASURY DEPARTMENT
PER PHONE CONVERSATION WITH E. R. STETTINIUS, JR.,

U:HW:W
cc: Miss Chauncey (for Sec(y), Paul, Gaston, White Pehle, Luxford, DuBois (2), E.M. Bernstein, Stewart, Lesser, Friedman, Hodel, Pollak, Abrahamson, Miss Laughlin.