

Ascher, Leopold (Request for Specifics)

000120

JAN 26 1945

Dear Mr. Eveleth:

This is to acknowledge and thank you for your letter of January 17, 1945, advising us that you have received news of the safe arrival of Mr. Leopold Asehner in Geneva. We are indeed glad that he has succeeded in reaching Switzerland.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle  
Executive Director

Mr. George S. Eveleth, Jr.,  
International General Electric Co.,  
570 Lexington Avenue,  
New York 22, New York.

EBT  
EBTowler:inp 1/26/45

000121

INTERNATIONAL  
GENERAL  ELECTRIC  
COMPANY  
INCORPORATED

GENERAL ELECTRIC BUILDING  
570 LEXINGTON AVE. AT 51ST ST., NEW YORK 22

GEORGE S. EVELETH, JR.  
VICE PRESIDENT

Jan. 17, 1945

War Refugee Board  
Executive Office of the President  
Washington 25, D.C.

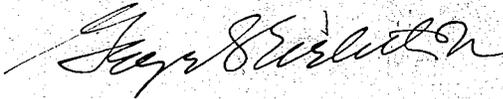
Attention: Mr. Lawrence S. Lesser  
Assistant Executive Director

Gentlemen:

We have had some correspondence with you in connection with Mr. Leopold Aschner, and you were kind enough to forward messages concerning him to Sweden. We are now advised that Aschner has arrived safely in Geneva, Switzerland.

We thank you for the attention you have given this matter.

Yours very truly,



GSE:to

000122

*J. P. Kelly (WRB)*

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington  
TO: American Legation, Bern  
DATE: October 24, 1944  
NUMBER: 3627 ✓

To Minister Harrison and McClelland.

Reference your 6853 to Department of October 14. Board's sole interest is to ascertain identity of persons behind this and similar schemes. Board has no interest in Aschner beyond its interest in any other victim of enemy persecution. Under censorship regulation no part of message demanding ransom has been or will be communicated to minor, nor will information you may uncover be made available for private use. Board is however much interested in the ultimate unraveling of the story and urgently awaits reports of all developments.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 237. ✓

1002

**CONTROL COPY**

NOV 01 1944

RECEIVED  
STATE DEPT.

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

000123

CABLE TO MINISTER HARRISON AT BERN AND MCCLELLAND

Reference your 6853 to Department of October 14. Board's sole interest is to ascertain identity of persons behind this and similar schemes. Board has no interest in Aschner beyond its interest in any other victim of enemy persecution. Under censorship regulation no part of message demanding ransom has been or will be communicated to Minor. Nor will information you may uncover be made available for private use. Board is however much interested in the ultimate unravelling of the story and urgently awaits reports of all developments.

THIS IS WRB BERN CABLE NO. 237.

9:30 a.m.  
October 24, 1944

Miss Chauncey (for the Sect'y) Abrahamson, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel,  
Lesser, Hanson, McCormack, Files  
LSLesser:ar 10/23/44

000124



-2- #6853, October 14, noon, from Bern

possible secure Aschner's release. Whether this sum included other members of Aschner's family (wife, son, daughter-in-law and grandchild) was not clear. Wolker gave no details whatever concerning channels through which this rescue was to be effected or to whom money was eventually to be paid.

Very much upset by this request and understandably anxious to do all possible to save Aschner G started trying to raise money meanwhile in effort to gain time requesting additional information from Walder as to conditions number of persons involved et cetera, G cabled Stockholm and Argentine branches of Tungsram soliciting financial contributions. Stockholm replied they could raise 30%. Argentine wired their authorities had denied permission to transfer funds to Switzerland.

British apparently intercepted G's Argentine cables and had their Zurich Consul cross-question him closely. G declared he was mainly trying to gain time and secure details and proposal. He was attempting to gather funds in order to strengthen his hand and enable him to continue negotiations but that as matters stood he had no intention of paying anything out without additional information from Budapest or discussing the matter with our Legation.

On September

000126

-3- #6853, October 14, noon from Bern

On September 27 Walder cabled that unless G could open credit it might be difficult continue protecting Aeschner. G answered indicating it was impossible for him give definite answer without talking matter over personally with Walder whom he invited to come to Switzerland.

Walder replied early in October that a meeting could only be fruitful if G had news in hand.

Meanwhile news had reached G through usually reliable channels that Aeschner had died of pneumonia at concentration camp of Mauthausen B/L in Vin Austria where he had been confined for some months. This news remains unconfirmed and G is disinclined to believe it. We are checking it through all possible channels. At my suggestion G cabled Walder on October 12 that it was impossible for him pursue matter until question Aeschner's reported death was clarified. He repeated his invitation to Walder to come to Switzerland stating that progress was being made in collecting funds but that amplification conditions of payment was imperative.

In my personal opinion this case still offers considerable margin for "stalling" but it is indispensable that I (\*) on regarding what Germans are involved by be procured.

Impending

000127

-4- #6853, October 14, noon from Bern

Impending Russian occupation of Hungary may put stop to whole matter although Aeschner's wife, daughter-in-law and grandchild are still thought to be in Budapest while his son is in Honved labor camp for Jews at Erdovaros Hungary.

As precautionary measure Swiss entry visa is being requested for Walder. For moment therefore matter is in hand and I see no reason for upsetting Mr. Minor of International General Electric with it.

Will keep you posted.

HARRISON

JMS

(\*) Apparent omission

000128

*I want to BN  
Pelle*

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington  
TO: American Legation, Bern  
DATE: September 30, 1944  
NUMBER: 3381

**CONTROL COPY**

The following is the substance of a message received from Amlegation Stockholm:

QUOTE The Swedish Legation in Budapest has forwarded to the Swedish Foreign Office the following message for Clark Minor President of International General Electric Company New York. President Minor or any of his deputies are requested by the Vereinigte Elektrizitat Sundgluh Lampen A. G. (Hungary) to place as a loan for the liberation of Leopold Aschner (held in Germany) the amount of one million Swiss francs. The funds are to be placed at the disposal of General Manager Alfred Schafer of the Schweizerische Bank Gesellschaft Zurich who will receive instructions from the Hungarian company as to the identity of the ultimate payee. It is stated that these funds are urgently needed to save Aschner's life. UNQUOTE

This message is not being delivered to addressee.

Please endeavor to ascertain whether Schafer has any instructions concerning this matter and, if so, what they

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972 are

000129

2.

are and who they came from. You should, of course, exercise the utmost discretion and should not indicate to Schafer that the above message or its substance is known to this Government.

This is WRB cable to Bern No. 188.

The foregoing cable is to Minister Harrison for McClelland from War Refugee Board.

HULL

RECEIVED  
1945

000130



DEPARTMENT

OF STATE  
Distribution of this message only by special  
arrangement.

OUTGOING TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

AMLEGATION

STOCKHOLM  
1969x

The cable below for Olsen is WRB 92.

Reference your 3810 of September 22, your 83 to WRB.

The message is not (repeat not) being delivered to Clark Minor. Please endeavor to ascertain through Wallenberg with whom the demand originated and to whom it is intended that the ransom is to go. The message has been repeated to Amlegation Bern for discreet inquiry of Schafer. No intimation should, of course, be given with respect to the delivery of the message or the probability of compliance.

HULL  
(GLW)

For security reasons the text of this message must be closely guarded.

WRB:MMV:KG  
9/29/44

NOE

WE

CONTROL COPY

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

000132

CABLE TO MINISTER JOHNSON AT STOCKHOLM FOR OLSEN

Reference your 3810 of September 22, year 43 to WEB.

The message is not (repeat not) being delivered to Clark Minor.  
Please endeavor to ascertain through Wallenberg with whom the demand  
originated and to whom it is intended that the ransom be to go. The  
message has been repeated to Amlegation Bern for discreet inquiry of  
Schafer. No intimation should, of course, be given with respect to  
the delivery of the message or the probability of compliance.

THIS IS WEB STOCKHOLM CABLE NO. 92.

10:30 a.m.  
September 29, 1944

LSL:eser:tmh 9-29-44

L.S.V.

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

000133

INSTRUCTIONS FROM OFFICER:

"May be passed to WRE for their information only and WRE is to be instructed that message is not repeat not to be delivered to Clark Minor."

000134

DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

BJR - 351  
Distribution of true  
reading only by special  
arrangement. (S) (W)

Stockholm

Dated September 22, 1944

Rec'd 10:31 a.m.

*War Ref Bd*

*(Mr)*

*(Pelle)*

Secretary of State,

Washington.

X  
3810, September 22, 10 a.m.

FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD

For security reasons the  
text of this message must  
be closely guarded.

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

The Swedish Legation in Budapest has forwarded to the Swedish Foreign Office the following message for Clark Minor President of International General Electric Company New York. This is our number 83, and is related to WRB 49 (Department's 1374, July 11, 8 p.m.) and WRB 78 (Department's 1700, August 24, 7 p.m.).

President Minor or any of his deputies are requested by the Vereinigte Elektrizitat Sundgluh Lampen A.G. (Hungary) to place as a loan for the liberation of Leopold Aschner (held in Germany) the amount of one million Swiss francs. The funds are to be placed at the disposal of General Manager Alfred Schafer of the Schweizerische Bank Gesellschaft Zurich who will receive instructions from the Hungarian company as to the identity of the ultimate payee. It is stated that these funds are

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date, SEP 27 1970

**CONTROL COPY**

*Aschner, Leopold*

000135

-2- #3810, September 22, 10 a.m., from Stockholm.

funds are urgently needed to save Aschner's life.

JOHNSON

WFS

000136

AUG 30 1944

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of August 23, 1944.

If we should receive any further pertinent information indicating that you may be of additional assistance to Mr. Aschner, we will advise you.

Very truly yours,

*Lawrence S. Lesser*

Lawrence S. Lesser,  
Assistant Executive Director.

Mr. George S. Eveleth, Jr.,  
International General Electric Company,  
570 Lexington Avenue at 61st St.,  
New York, New York.

LSLesser:tnh 8-29-44

000137

INTERNATIONAL  
GENERAL  ELECTRIC  
COMPANY  
INCORPORATED

GENERAL ELECTRIC BUILDING  
570 LEXINGTON AVE. AT 51ST ST., NEW YORK

GEORGE S. EVELETH, JR.  
VICE PRESIDENT

August 23, 1944

Mr. George S. Eveleth, Jr.  
570 Lexington Ave.  
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Clarence Lister,  
Assistant Director

Dear Sir:

We wish to express our appreciation to you for your  
kindness in providing the information received and the assistance  
of the VTC in Stockholm, Sweden. We thank you for the information  
furnished in your letter.

We would appreciate it if you would let us know whether  
or not you have the means for obtaining the necessary  
visa to go from Hungary to Sweden. We would also appreciate  
receiving any suggestion from you as to how we might be of further  
service to the VTC.

Yours very truly,



G. S. Eveleth, Jr.

700130

DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE

OUTGOING  
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

HC  
Distribution of text  
reading only by special  
arrangement. (244 AOB:W) 12-16

*51 Wm Ref*  
*R/S*  
For security reasons the  
text of this message must  
be closely guarded.

AMLEGATION,  
STOCKHOLM.  
1700

August 24, 1944

The cable below for Olsen is WRB 78.

Reference your No. 3028 of August 10, 1944. For  
your information, word has been received here to the  
effect that Aeschner, director general Tanageram  
Budapest has been taken to Germany and that payment  
of ransom in Sweden or Switzerland is being demanded  
for his release.

HULL  
GHIW

CONTROL COPY

WRB:MMV:KG  
8/23/44

NOE

SE

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

000134

DARD  
C.

CABLE TO JOHNSON, STOCKHOLM, FOR OLSEN FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Reference your No. 3028 of August 10, 1944. For your information, word has been received here to the effect that Aeschner, director general Tunggram Budapest has been taken to Germany and that payment of ransom in Sweden or Switzerland is being demanded for his release.

THIS IS WRB STOCKHOLM CABLE NO. 78

1:45 p.m.  
August 23, 1944

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

Ba. jth ✓  
FHodel:jth 8/21/44

000140

FOREIGN FUNDS CONTROL

To: Miss J. Hodder 196 Main J  
(1) ..... (Room) (Bldg.)  
(2) ..... (Room) (Bldg.)  
(3) ..... (Room) (Bldg.)

For comments & recommendations  
as to disposition.

~~Account eliminated in 1944  
et al. 1944, fruit box  
and other samples.~~

From: J. W. SHEPHERD ..... AUG 12 '44  
713 ..... (Date)  
(Room) J. N. B. (Bldg.)

000141

19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

1111 117011

9/15/40  
21-1-1-1

000142

DECLASSIFIED  
NN Memo 11-15-77  
Raff, JUL 1 1979

[REDACTED]

SPECIAL NOTICE—This contains information taken from private communications, and its extremely confidential character must be preserved. The information must be confined only to those officials whose knowledge of it is necessary to prosecution of the case. It is not to be widely distributed, or copied, made, or the contents thereof discussed in any other public way without express consent of the Director of Sponsorship.

000143

DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE

INCOMING TELEGRAM DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

BAS-327  
Distribution of true reading only by special arrangement. (SECRET-W)

**CONTROL COPY**

Dated August 10, 1944

Rec'd 2 P.M.  
For security reasons the text of this message must be closely guarded

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

3028, August 10, 2 p.m.

Eastrom of ASEA has taken up Leopold Aschner matter with Swedish Foreign Office, as a result of which Aschner and family have been given Swedish visas. This is our 684 WRB in reply to WRB 49 (Department's 1374 of July 12). However, Foreign Office is not hopeful of prospects of evacuating these people to Sweden. Of almost 1000 for whom Sweden has issued visas, only nine have thus far been given transit visas by Germans. Swedish Foreign Office states however that it is pressing matter actively and strongly.

JOHNSON

WSB

*English & International  
General Electric has  
been advised by telephone  
8/15/44 L.S.L.*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
1944 AUG 12 AM 9 47  
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS (LIAISON)

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date **SEP 27 1972**

000144

DEPARTMENT  
OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
Transmission of true  
reading only by special  
arrangement.

OUTGOING  
TELEGRAM

*5 War Ref Bd - Pelle*

JULY 13 1944  
8 p.m.  
DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

CONTROL COPY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
JUL 13 1944

AMLEGATION,

STOCKHOLM.  
1374 X

The WRS cable 49 below is for Olsen.

For security reasons the  
text of this message must  
be kept secret.

In view of matter contained page twenty-six of Bohm report,  
and as an experimental matter, please deliver the following  
message from the War Refugee Board to Mr. Edstrom, Chairman of  
the Board of the A.S.E.A., Vasteras: QUOTE Leopold Aschner,  
managing director of the United Incandescent Lamps and Electric  
Company of Budapest and his wife and son are being detained in  
a concentration camp by Hungarian authorities and are in imminent  
danger of deportation to Poland and death solely because they are  
Jewish. Please appeal to the Utrikes-department to take Aschner  
and his family under Swedish protection, to issue to them such  
documents as may enable them to secure refuge in Sweden, and to  
take such other action as may be possible to safeguard their lives.  
Please advise me <sup>through</sup> Iver Olsen, American Legation, of action  
taken. I will personally appreciate anything you can do. Signed  
Gerard Swope, President, General Electric Company, New York UNQUOTE.

If Edstrom complies with foregoing request, and his appeal is  
successful, an avenue may be opened to secure Swedish protection  
for a larger number of persons than Bohm indicates are now receiving

DECLASSIFIED such  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

000145

-2- #1874, July 11, 8 p.m., to Stockholm.

such protection. Please keep Board advised.

HULL  
(GLW)

WRB:MMV:KG  
7/11/44

S/CR

NOE

SE

000146

~~SECRET~~

CABLE TO MINISTER JOHNSON AT STOCKHOLM FOR OLSEN

In view of matter contained page twenty-six of Bohm report, and as an experimental matter, please deliver the following message from the War Refugee Board to Mr. Edstrom, Chairman of the Board of the A.S.E.A., Vasteras: QUOTE Leopold Aschner, managing director of the United Incandescent Lamps and Electric Co. of Budapest and his wife and son are being detained in a concentration camp by Hungarian authorities and are in imminent danger of deportation to Poland and death solely because they are Jewish. Please appeal to the Utrikes-department to take Aschner and his family under Swedish protection, to issue to them such documents as may enable them to secure refuge in Sweden, and to take such other action as may be possible to safeguard their lives. Please advise me through Iver Olsen, American Legation, of action taken. I will personally appreciate anything you can do. Signed Gerard Swope, President, General Electric Co., New York. UNQUOTE.

If Edstrom complies with foregoing request, and his appeal is successful, an avenue may be opened to secure Swedish protection for a larger number of persons than Bohm indicates are now receiving such protection. Please keep Board advised.

THIS IS WRB STOCKHOLM CABLE NO. <sup>49</sup>     .

9:05 a.m.  
July 10, 1944

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

LSL  
LSLesser:als 7/8/44

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
By R. H. Parks Date SEP-27 1972

000147

2978

570 LEXINGTON AVE., NEW YORK 22

July 10, 1944

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

Mr. J.W. Penle  
Executive Director  
War Refugee Board  
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Penle:

This will acknowledge with thanks your letter of July 3, 1944, in which you quoted message sent to Mr. Easton by the Department of State concerning Mr. Leopold Aschner and his family.

We are most appreciative of your efforts on behalf of Mr. Aschner, and we thank you for the excellent attention which was given this matter.

We trust you will keep us informed of any developments.

Very truly yours,

*George S. Eichel*

G. S. Eichel:to

*Aschner Leopold*

100140

JUL 8 - 1944

Dear Mr. Eveleth:

Pursuant to your telephone conversation with Mr. Lesser, the following message has been sent to the Department of State for transmission to Mr. Edstrom, Chairman of the Board of the A.S.E.A., Vasteras:

"Leopold Aschner, managing director of the United Incandescent Lamps and Electric Co. of Budapest and his wife and son are being detained in a concentration camp by Hungarian authorities and are in imminent danger of deportation to Poland and death solely because they are Jewish. Please appeal to the Utrikes-department to take Aschner and his family under Swedish protection, to issue to them such documents as may enable them to secure refuge in Sweden, and to take such other action as may be possible to safeguard their lives. Please advise me through Iver Olsen, American Legation, of action taken. I will personally appreciate anything you can do. Signed Gerard Swope, President, General Electric Co., New York."

Very truly yours,

*(s) J. W. Fehle*

J. W. Fehle  
Executive Director

Mr. G. S. Eveleth, Jr.,  
International General Electric Co.,  
570 Lexington Avenue  
New York, N. Y.

*G.S.L.*

LSLessertals 7/8/44

000149

2909

G. S. EVELETH, JR.  
570 LEXINGTON AVENUE  
NEW YORK, N. Y.

W. R. B. \_\_\_\_\_  
Filing Authority  
To: Files  
Ans. \_\_\_\_\_  
No. Ans. Req.   
Initial LSL  
Date 6-7-44

June 29, 1944

Mr. John W. Pehle  
Acting Executive Director  
War Refugee Board  
State Department  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Pehle:

*Discussed with  
Eveleth on the  
telephone - will  
script the history of G. S. E.  
Several to make LSL  
representations.*

While the latter may not come within the purview of your organization I am nevertheless writing this letter in the hope that some assistance may thereby be rendered deserving friends in Hungary. I have learned through London that Mr. Léopold Aschner and his family (probably consisting of his wife and son) are now in an internment camp in Hungary—presumably because they are Jewish. Mr. and Mrs. Aschner must be well past sixty years of age and are therefore hardly young enough to withstand the rigours of a concentration camp.

Mr. Aschner has for many years been the managing director of United Incandescent Lamps and Electric Co. of Budapest and is an acquaintance of long standing. He is, of course, an enemy national, but as I know him to be an honorable man with liberal convictions and loyalty to his principles, I am sure he and his family are deserving of any aid that might be gotten to them.

The International General Electric Co., of which I am Vice President, has long had connections with the United Incandescent Lamps and Electric Co., and Mr. Aschner is very well known to our officials. I am sure that both Mr. Gerard Swope, President of General Electric Co., and Mr. Clark H. Minor, President of International General Electric Co., would be glad to give you their favorable knowledge of Mr. Aschner, should you so desire.

Any steps that you may be able to take, or may be able to suggest to me, with the object of assisting these people will be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,

*George Swope*

*Aschner Leopold*

*Eveleth Aschner back -  
Edstrom - Chm. ASE A -  
V. A. S. to L. S. L.  
W. R. B. to L. S. L.  
G. S. E. - 6-7-44  
L. S. L.*

000150