

England (James Mann)

000573

SEP 28 1944

Dear Jim:

I have received your letter of September 19th and I am glad to know that things are nicely under way for you in London.

Your comments concerning the views of the people you have contacted with respect to a final warning to Germany are of interest here since we are receiving urgent requests for similar action at this end. We are now giving serious consideration to the issuance of such a warning. At the moment we are considering a statement from the military rather than a political document such as the March 24th statement of the President.

The confidential information you have sent concerning the War Crimes Commission was of great interest to us and we are working hard on the problem at this end. We are again pressing on the matter and I enclose for your information a copy of my latest memorandum to State on the question.

It is indeed interesting that the British are still raising questions concerning our licenses. As you know, the matter was thoroughly discussed with Dingle Foot when he was here in Washington and previous to that time State delivered an aide memoire to the British with a full statement concerning this Government's policy with respect to the financing of rescue and relief operations in enemy territory. In case you do not have a copy of the aide memoire, I enclose one for your file. In this connection, I also enclose a copy of the cable which we sent to McClelland at the time the Sternbuch tractor deal was raised in Bern. You will note that this cable was from the Department, War Refugee Board and FEA and that it clearly states our policy on these matters. (By the way, Life Magazine recently published a picture illustrating why the Germans are so interested in tractors. It showed a little agricultural tractor pulling several carloads of German war materiel through the streets of Paris during the German evacuation of the city.) From your cables of September 13th and 16th concerning license W-2215 and from your letter, it is clear to me that you are taking the proper line on this matter. M.E.W., of course, is wrong in interpreting our licenses as an attempt to authorize persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom to undertake

000574

Enclosures:

Copy of Aide Memoire

Cables:

3040 to Bern 9/2/44
4874 from " 7/29/44
6092 " " 9/15/44
6252 " " 9/21/44
3186 to " 9/14/44
3811 from Stockholm 9/22
6113 " Bern 9/16/44
#6107 " " 9/15/44
6093 " " 9/15/44
1794 " Ankara 9/22
1799 " " 9/23
Letter 9/28 to Melloy & enc.

000575

transactions contrary to the laws and regulations of the United Kingdom. Our licenses authorize transactions merely insofar as our own regulations are concerned. This is clearly understood by the groups in this country who were licensed to effect their rescue programs through London. We await with interest your report on the discussion between Ambassador Winant and Foreign Minister Eden concerning relief in kind through the blockade.

Our food package program is well under way now. The first 15,000 packages arrived in Gotheberg on the Gripsholm and are now in the hands of the International Red Cross. The balance of 285,000 are now being packed by the American Red Cross and the first batch of 185,000 will leave this country around October 23rd.

You may be interested to know that, following our instructions to Dexter to wind up his work for the Board by December 1st, we received requests from Olsen and Hirschmann for authority to bring to a close their War Refugee Board activities in Stockholm and Ankara. Olsen has been advised that he may anticipate the closing out of his War Refugee Board work by the end of November and Hirschmann has been requested to return to this country for consultation with the Board.

I have discussed with Lux the necessity for clarification of your position with regard to Treasury work and I understand from him that Bill Taylor will discuss the matter with you in London. Your transfer to the War Refugee Board from the State Department has been effected as of September 11th.

We are sending you all our weekly reports and hope that you have been receiving them promptly. It occurred to me that, in addition to these, you might like to have the texts of some of the more recent and interesting messages that have come through from Switzerland and Turkey and for your confidential information, I enclose copies of several of these documents. We shall try to send these to you from time to time in addition to our regular reports.

With kindest personal regards,

Sincerely,

(Signed) John

Mr. James Mann,
% American Embassy,
London, England.

Enclosures.

FH:hd 9/27/44

*Original signed
by Mr. Peble -*

000576

September 19, 1944

PERSONAL AND ~~SECRET~~

Dear John:

In my two weeks here I have seen the principal groups and individuals interested in rescue activities. Few, if any, of them have any helpful suggestions, and most are interested only in talking finance. I think we can say that the various groups view rescue work as at an end and are only waiting for the end of organized resistance in Germany.

The Poles have furnished me with a memorandum of their suggestions which I forwarded to you with despatch No. 13066 of September 16. I didn't consider this document of sufficient importance to warrant a cable since all of the points therein outlined are before the Board. The Polish groups interested in refugees strike me as being as unrealistic as the Poles in the past have been in carrying out their foreign policy. They have only one thought in mind and that is "give us money." They aren't too clear concerning just how the money will be used inside Poland to effect either rescue or relief. One point which the Poles make and on which all other groups agree is that the effectiveness of our OWI broadcasts could be increased and that it would perhaps be helpful if our Government issued a final warning to those guilty of persecuting Jews and others and an appeal to the peoples of the remaining occupied countries to give Jews refuge until the end of the war. I have been unable to do anything on the OWI broadcasts since the broadcasts to the Balkans, Czechoslovakia and Poland do not originate here and the broadcasts are prepared in New York. The various groups emphasize that our broadcasts should be constantly repeated and that at present we broadcast an item for a day or so and then forget it. Of course, I can not vouch for the expertness of the persons who have made these comments. In connection with financial assistance to the Poles, I feel that the money sent through the Polish Labor Group was placed in the best hands for obtaining results in rescue work in Poland.

I was somewhat surprised to find that the persons in the Czech Government charged with rescue activities and the problem of displaced persons did not know of the War Refugee Board. We have, however, had conversations and I am now awaiting a memorandum from them outlining the situation in Czechoslovakia, together with such suggestions as they may care to make.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. LHM:1-11-78
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

000577

I have talked with Herbert Pell, American member of the War Crimes Commission, and he has not yet received any instructions from Washington along the lines of the memorandum and suggested cable which the Board sent to Mr. Stettinius some time before I left Washington. Pell is very much concerned about this and points out that time is most important since certain important members of the Commission will soon be leaving for their respective countries as soon as they are liberated. Pell's heart is definitely in the right place but he is not too forceful and I am afraid that he is not altogether clear on the functions of the War Crimes Commission. For instance, yesterday I asked him for a copy of the "terms of reference" outlining the authority of the War Crimes Commission. He could not give them to me and stated that he did not know exactly what the terms of reference were, since they were contained partly in a document, partly in a speech, etc. He appears to abide by all of the decisions of the Law Committee of the Commission without asking too many questions. However, in addition to the story which he gave Dubois, I have picked up one or two other little tidbits which are most surprising and which may give the Board some ammunition with which to work.

Pell tells me that until a short while ago he had an assistant by the name of Lawrence Preuss, who was sent to him by the Department of State and who claimed that he was in a position to speak the Department's views concerning the work of the Commission. At one time Pell prepared a memorandum for the Law Committee in which he suggested that the Commission concern itself with crimes committed by one German against another German, against a stateless person, or against a national of a German ally. Before giving such document to the Committee, he did not consult Preuss for, as Pell put it, Preuss was his subordinate sent over here to advise him, and in this case he felt that he did not need his advice. However, he took Preuss with him to the meeting at which he gave the Committee his memorandum, and to his utter surprise and amazement Preuss spoke against the memorandum and said that it did not represent the views of the Department of State. Preuss continually opposed Pell in his efforts and eventually went back to the Department of State where, presumably, he now is. However, before going he told the clerks in Pell's office that he would see to it that the War Crimes Commission did nothing for the Jews. Pell does not know that I am communicating this to you. I was careful not to ask him whether I could since I was certain that he would say "no". Accordingly, I must warn that this information must be discreetly used so that Pell's position will not be further undermined.

000578

Another very interesting incident in connection with the War Crimes Commission is that on May 23, 1944, the Commission sent a letter to the British Foreign Office pointing out that the crimes committed by a German against another German, a stateless person, or a national of a German ally were not being considered by the War Crimes Commission. The British Foreign Office was asked to communicate this to the various Governments represented on the Commission and ask such Governments to explore the matter and make suggestions as to how such should be handled. No reply from any Government has been received to this date. Fell and the Czech representative appear to be infuriated by this lack of response but are doing nothing. I asked if he were certain that the British Foreign Office had transmitted the letter to the various Governments as requested, and his answer was that he assumed that it had. Apparently the British Foreign Office is used as the Post Office for the Crimes Commission since the latter has its seat in London.

The Board's cable to Dexter suggesting that he prepare to liquidate his work in the Iberian Peninsula has been received and I consider the liquidation a very wise move. Dobkin (Chief of the Immigration Service for Palestine), whom I knew in Portugal, has been in England, and of his own accord he confessed to me that he considered Dexter something of a mental black-out. Incidentally, Dobkin, who has been one of those pushing hardest for action in the rescue of refugees, now has no suggestions concerning action which we might take, other than a final warning along the lines indicated above. That, I consider a very good indication that there isn't too much in the way of new programs to be instituted.

Laura Margolis of the JDC is presently in London and has asked me to arrange transportation for her to Sweden. I don't know what success I shall have with the Embassy, and it is possible that you will have received a cable from me when you get this letter asking the Board's intervention in Washington.

I think there is nothing at this point which I can add to my cables concerning the difficulties which the British are making in those cases where funds were remitted to England for rescue purposes. The matter of the so-called use of hard currency under Treasury licenses is presumably going to be discussed with the Ambassador tomorrow or the next day by Eden when they discuss relief in kind through the blockade. I have discussed this matter with Stone of the FEA and told him that we were not prepared at this time to make any concessions whatsoever on our policy. According to the strategy agreed upon,

000579

the Ambassador will merely listen to the British comments and then after the meeting we will decide what to do. It is possible that there will be developments in this conversation which will necessarily have to be reported to Washington.

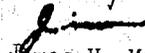
As you know, the Ambassador has been extremely cooperative. I have not had very many things come up which required his attention. Of course I informed him of my lengthy cable concerning the Hungarian situation (communication of British Minister in Berne). As the Board knows, he is very much interested in our problems. As he puts it, in order to do a job in this field, the work must be more than a job; it must be a religion with the person. I am certain that it is a religion with the Ambassador. The Embassy staff has been cooperative. There is a shortage of office space and I have had to impose myself on Buzz and Glendinning. I am sharing an office with Glendinning which is sufficient for my purposes.

Sidney Browne has been very nice and has cooperated on all things. However, I have the feeling that he sort of resents my sending the cables "From Mann for Pehle". Accordingly, in order to humor him, I have written the despatches in rough draft and have let him send them in. We have only sent two or three despatches and I trust that they have been received by the Board.

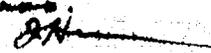
As yet Buzz has received nothing which could in any way clarify my position with regard to Treasury work. He wrote a letter, which he mentioned to me, to Lux on this matter the Monday after I arrived. However, he has received nothing in reply. I wish to point out that it is difficult for me to be of much assistance to Buzz until the Treasury has made some move clarifying my status. As you know, Buzz is doing the most confidential sort of work and it could prove embarrassing for an employee of the War Refugee Board to be turned loose on such projects before some kind of clarification from the Treasury Department is received. Buzz has been extremely nice and has been of great help to me on many of the problems here.

It would be very helpful if someone at the Board could take a few minutes and drop me a personal letter, bringing me up to date on the happenings there and the plans for the future. Also, I have not been advised whether my transfer from State to the Board has actually been effected. I would appreciate knowing about this.

Sincerely yours, /


James H. Mann

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

P.S. Regards to all on the Board and Trans.


000580