

Evacuation of Refugees To and Through Turkey

000617

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
WAR REFUGEE BOARD

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

*File*  
*JSP*  
DATE July 6, 1944.

TO Mr. Pehle  
FROM Mr. Friedman

After examining the attached cable from Ankara, the Bloom Resolution and the cables exchanged between ourselves and Steinhardt during my absence from the office I suggest the following:

(1) Do not answer the attached cable. When Steinhardt is here explain the reasons for the introduction of the Bloom Resolution and ask him for a fuller account of the situation on the Turkish, Bulgarian border. From my own reading of the cables I do not think that we have a sufficiently good case to deny the arguments in the attached cable. The only thing to do is to probe a little in conversation with Steinhardt to see the bases of his strong opinion that the Turkish Government is doing everything possible in refugee matters. Unless his case is very weak, I would indicate to him that we will of course accept his judgment about not giving publicity to the Bloom Resolution.

(2) While we may not be in a position to ask Bloom to withdraw his resolution, I should be inclined to talk with him informally explaining that as a result of facts expressed to you personally by Steinhardt and which were not known at the time of the Bloom Resolution, you are now convinced that it would not produce any substantial benefits and might cause some harm. If properly put on this basis of "newly discovered and secret information" Bloom might be willing without embarrassment to let the matter die. I do not know whether we are in a position to do this but my own feeling is that we should let the matter die, if at all possible.

*Has usual route  
Steinhardt*

*JBF*

Attachment

000618

DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

BE-594  
Distribution of true  
reading only by special  
arrangement (SECTION W)

Ankara

Dated July 3, 1944

Rec'd 4:40 a.m., 5th

*Kepus*  
*Central to Hacked*

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

Secretary of State  
Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

MOST IMMEDIATE

2010, July 3, 10 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

FOR THE WRB FROM HIRSCHMANN

Ankara No. 83.

Not only would it be harmful to give pending resolution referred to in your 583, June 29, publicity here but it would be even more harmful were it to receive publicity in the United States as such publicity would immediately be reproduced in the Turkish press. I suggest, therefore, that ~~Congressman~~ Bloom be requested immediately to withdraw the resolution, making every possible effort to avoid all publicity with respect to it.

My reasons are as follows (A) "Recognition" by the house of Representatives that "full advantage has not been taken of the great opportunities for the evacuation of refugees in the Balkan countries through Turkey" is an implied criticism of the activities of the WRB and will unquestionably be so construed.

Furthermore

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

000619

-2- #2010, July 3, 10 p.m. (SECTION ONE) from Ankara  
Furthermore, the statement is inaccurate in that the  
fullest advantage has been taken commensurate with  
existing conditions which it becomes increasingly  
apparent are not fully understood in the United  
States.

As long as it remains the policy of the German  
Government to put every conceivable obstacle in the  
way of the exit of Jews from the Balkans, it is only  
possible to rescue those whose departure is permitted  
by the German authorities or who succeed in escaping  
surreptitiously. In so far as concerns the transportation  
to safety of those who succeed in escaping, it ill  
behoves a branch of the legislature of the Government  
of the United States to declare that full advantage  
has not been taken of the great opportunities for  
the evacuation of refugees in the Balkan countries as  
long as the Government of the United States continues  
to fail to make available a single vessel to those  
charged with effecting these rescues.

STEINHARDT

RR NPL

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DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

**CONTROL COPY**

BJR - 598  
Distribution of true  
reading only by special  
arrangement. (W)

Ankara  
Dated July 3, 1944  
Rec'd 6:34 a.m. 5th.

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

Secretary of State  
Washington.

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**JUL 5 1944**  
DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS & RECORDS

MOST IMMEDIATE  
2010, <sup>July</sup> June 3, 10 p.m. (See <sup>Two</sup>)

If, as proposed by the pending resolution, the Secretary of State were to urge the Government of Turkey to facilitate the entry of refugees who can escape from the Nazis into Turkey, he might well be requested by the Turkish Government to specify when and under what circumstances the Government of Turkey has refused entry into Turkey to Jewish refugees who escaped from the Nazis. As the Board has previously been advised, only one isolated instance of this kind is known to the Embassy, as against which the Turkish Government has granted entry and transit to thousands of Jewish refugees, many of whom have arrived without documents of any kind, since the outbreak of the war. The Turkish Government would probably further reply that while it had

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By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

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-2- #2010, June 3, 10 p.m., from Ankara.

it had made one of its six passenger vessels available for the evacuation of Jewish refugees from the Balkans, the use of which has been denied only by the failure of the Germans to grant a safe conduct, the Government of the United States has thus far failed to make available a single vessel for this purpose, notwithstanding the offer of the Turkish Government to employ its own vessels for evacuating refugees from Balkan ports to Istanbul and to make use of American vessel elsewhere in substitution thereof.

As to the request that the Turkish Government establish a refugee camp in which Jewish refugees can be temporarily sheltered, the Turkish Government would doubtless inquire of the Secretary of State as to who is to be placed in these refugee camps, pending the arrival in Turkey of a sufficient number of refugees to make such camps necessary. In this connection it should be borne in mind that the largest number of Jewish refugees who have ever arrived in Turkey from the Balkans at one time has been approximately 350, and that thus far there has been

no serious

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-3- #2010, June 3, 10 p.m., from Ankara.

no serious difficulty in immediately transporting to Palestine the groups who have arrived. Furthermore, were temporary asylum in Turkey necessary pending transportation facilities to Palestine, the absorptive capacity of the Jewish community of Istanbul is not less than the thousand persons. In view of the foregoing circumstances a request of the Turkish Government to establish a refugee camp at this time for Jewish refugees could only display gross ignorance of the refugee problem in Turkey and subject the Government of the United States to ridicule.

The War Refugee Board may wish to inquire of Congressman Bloom as to the source of the erroneous information on which his resolution was predicated.

STEINHARDT

RB  
RR

000623

DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE

INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

BE-594  
Distribution of true  
reading only by special  
arrangement [redacted] W)

Ankara  
Dated July 3, 1944  
Rec'd 4:40 a.m., 5th

**CONTROL COPY**

Secretary of State

Washington

MOST IMMEDIATE

2010, July 3, 10 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72  
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DIVISION OF  
COMMUNICATIONS  
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000624



-2- #2010, July 3, 10 p.m. (SECTION ONE) from Ankara  
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STEINHARDT

RR NPL

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