

Evacuation of Yugoslav Refugees

Folder 2: D-G

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- Other (Specify)

For further correspondence with Ackermann concerning
Yugoslav Refugees -

SEE: ACKERMANN, LEONARD E.

000766

US Polad, AFHQ,
APO 512, FM, New York
October 6, 1944.

Dear John:

I have just returned from Bari where I made a fairly thorough check-up on the proposed evacuation of Jewish refugees from Yugoslavia. As I cabled you (No. 113) only 29 persons were evacuated on September 18th and none since that date. Since we had been given to understand that the people would be coming out at a rate faster than this, it was felt that some investigation was necessary.

The first thing learned was that the weather conditions were bad. As you no doubt are already aware, these people are located in Croatia and can only come out by plane--usually the return trip of the planes which bring in supplies. Starting about September 27th there has been bad flying weather all over Italy and Yugoslavia--so bad, in fact, that the 15th Air Force has been grounded for the longest period in its entire existence. This, however, did not account for the period between the 18th and the 27th. This might have been accounted for by the evacuation of airmen and wounded who have priority over refugees but an examination of records showed that very few persons in these categories arrived during this period.

Further investigation disclosed that about the 21st of September sharp political difference had developed between the British and Americans on the one hand and the Partisans on the other. It appears that Tito has made himself almost unavailable to British and American representatives and further that he had insisted that the British and American officers in Yugoslavia be severely limited in number and activity--that they could only be attached to the headquarters of the larger Army units and that they could only communicate with lower echelons through designated Partisan officers. This was considered to be an intolerable situation and was met by the refusal on the part of the British and American authorities (with the consent, I am told, of Roosevelt and Churchill) to send in further supplies until the Partisans had changed their position. This situation had continued up to the present and, of course, has sharply reduced the number of planes going into the country. There is no assurance when this will change but it is hoped that it will be soon.

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The information concerning the political situation has been classified as top secret and should therefore be treated by you accordingly. I am sure, however, as I cabled you that you will be able to get further information on the present situation and as to future developments from the State Department which is being kept fully informed.

After learning the above information, Perlman and I called on the British major in Force 399 who has been handling all of the details of the evacuation. He told us that the list of persons to be evacuated had been increased from 650 to about 700 by the Partisans. The latter, it appears, are quite willing, in fact anxious, to evacuate this group. There are about 1200 Jewish refugees--all formerly on the Island of Rab--who are now in the neighborhood of Topusko which is southeast of Karlovac. The Partisans want to keep all of the men between 16 and 50 but all others, old men, women and children can go. The people, the major said, were not in immediate danger of annihilation by the Germans but they were destitute, had little to eat and were sadly lacking in clothing and shelter. In this respect they were much worse off than the local Croats who had some farmlands as a source of food; in some cases (but not all) have some sort of shelter; and usually have a few sheep as a wool supply. The Partisans have given some relief to this group but since the Partisans themselves have very little such relief has been proportionately small. Therefore, the Partisans are anxious to see all but the able bodied go since they do not belong in this area in the first place, they constitute a drain on the food supply and they constitute a difficult group to move should the Germans enter the area.

The major said nothing about the political situation and attributed the halt in evacuation to the weather and the lack of planes. He said that he hoped that the weather would clear up in a few days and that the evacuation of refugees start again once the airmen and wounded had been cared for. He estimated that it would take several months to clear up the whole group but said, that in his opinion, there was only a five or ten percent chance of the Germans coming into this area on their retreat. In the meanwhile, he felt that there was great need for immediate relief which he was trying to arrange. The Partisans had agreed to permit one plane load of food, clothing and medicines to come in for the exclusive use of this group and it was expected that it would go in shortly. Most of the material to go on this plane is available, and Perlman has agreed to furnish money (and goods, if possible) for any needs which are lacking.

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September 17, 1944.

Dear John:

I have just seen Perlman of the JDC and received further details on the evacuation of Jews from Yugoslavia. During the last two weeks he has had conversations with several Palestine Unit intelligence officers who have spent some time in Yugoslavia. They gave him a certain amount of information on the condition of refugees in that country mentioning particularly the group of Jews who at one time had been on the Island of Rab. This is the same group referred to in my last letter and concerning whom Heathcote-Smith had also communicated with one of the British Intelligence services. This group (some of whom incidentally were brought to Vis by the Partisans, evacuated to Bari and later included in the shipment to Fort Ontario) includes Poles, Austrians and Germans. There are not to my knowledge many Yugoslavs among them. The total number is about 1400.

After getting some information on this group including their present location, Perlman went to see the British major in Force 399 who had been so helpful to me in the past and asked whether they could be included in the plane evacuations that are taking place. After several days he was advised that this could be done. They are to be evacuated in small groups as space permits. Wounded, rescued airman and others with higher priority will of course come first. It will probably take several weeks to get all of them out. I do not know whether Heathcote Smith's letter expedited this movement. It appears to have been sent at or about the same time that Perlman was having his discussions.

The Palestine Unit officers also advised Perlman about several other matters. They confirmed the information that we had received before to the effect that there is no anti-semitism at the top level among the Partisans and that Tito has given orders to treat all civilians alike. They stated, however, that this sentiment does not go all the way down into the ranks. Among some people there is still the age old anti-semitism which existed for any number of reasons. There is also some feeling in some groups that the Jews being tradesmen are capitalists as distinguished from the majority of the rest of the population which is agricultural and tends towards communism. A few of the Jews do not help their brethren too much by being very active in the black market. Whether they engage in this activity to a greater proportion than do others is a matter upon which

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I am not informed. Whatever the reason may be for this feeling, here are some of the reports on the treatment of the Jews in Yugoslavia:

1. An arrangement was made to evacuate a group of Jews by plane. One partisan officer who knew about the proposed evacuation arranged that the Jews be moved fifteen miles away from the landing field and when the planes arrived told the pilots that the people were not available.
2. In certain areas Jews do not receive the same rations or relief that is given to other members of the population.
3. On several occasions when the population in general was warned to move because of the approach of the German forces, Jews were not warned and therefore fell into German hands.

The Force 399 major said that he did not believe in the truth of these stories. ~~and~~ Under present circumstances it is difficult to evaluate them accurately. It would be my guess that part of them are true but on the other hand I have heard frequently both from refugees and Allied officers that in many places in Yugoslavia the Jews are properly treated.

Perlman then told the force 399 people that he had not only had this request for evacuation but that Yugoslav Jews had asked for assistance-usually in the form of money. He said that he did not have enough facts on which to base a recommendation thereon and wanted to go into Yugoslavia, if possible, so as to be able to survey affairs for himself. (I might advise you at this point that when Perlman and I saw Gen. Poljanac, the latter had been asked whether a certain Jewish doctor who claimed to represent the Partisan Croatian Red Cross had the authority to request funds. At that time the answer was in the negative.) Perlman was first advised that his request to go in would most likely be granted but several days later was told that it might not be possible for some time. There appears to be objection to the entrance of unarmed persons because operations are still very active in the area. The final answer has not been given as yet and the trip may still be arranged.

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Since I only wrote to you several days ago there are no other developments of great importance. Gov. Cochrane of UNRRA spoke to me yesterday about Fedhala. He is still very anxious to close the camp in the near future. It is planned to move about 400 Greeks who are there to one of the Greek camps in the middle east and this will only leave a small group there. The main reason for closing soon is to make ~~the~~ personnel available for other places. I told him that I did not think that conditions had changed sufficiently since the meeting of the Advisory Committee for me to change my position. He then said that it appeared that UNRRA would be running two reserve camps--Phillipville and Fedhala and that this was too much in this day of the shortage of manpower. He thought that he could satisfy the security people by establishing a closed area in the reception camp at Bone near Phillipville. I again said that I hoped to be able to agree with him shortly but that the whole tenor of the meeting had been that at this stage of the game we should wait a little while longer before taking an irrevocable step. He agreed with this but said that he wanted to plan on closing the camp by the 1st of November and hoped that UNRRA would be able to do so. That is just about where we left the matter. In other words, there was no decision. I expect that the matter will come up again at the next meeting of the committee which is now tentatively scheduled for September 27th in Rome.

I am enclosing a copy of the telegram which Heatcote Smith sent to the IGCR in London and also the second page of the cable which he proposed that I send to the Board. I failed to include this in my previous letter.

Sincerely,

Leonard
Leonard E. Ackermann
Special Representative

Mr. John A. Lehle
Executive Office of the President
War Refugee Board
Washington, 25, DC

000772

INTER GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE
ON REFUGEES,
IN ADJUNCTS ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO. 394.

13th September, 1944.

REFERENCE: LGOR/35.

FROM : Resident Representative,
Inter Governmental Committee on Refugees.

TO : Executive Commissioner, H.C., A.C.C.
Mr. Myron Taylor, American Ambassador to the Vatican,
Mr. E. Ackermann, War Refugee Board Representative.

Herewith for information text of a telegram sent to-day from myself to I.C.C., London, through British High Commission to the Foreign Office.

Following for Mr Herbert Morrison Inter Governmental Committee on Refugees from Netherlands-2a th.

Re: telegram No.15.

Most urgent. Subject: Proposal to extend provisional political protection to all Jews in Axis hands.

Proposal is that a solemn joint announcement would be made by President Roosevelt and Premier Churchill to Germany and all satellite powers.

It would declare all Jews and others in Axis hands already denationalised under racial laws, and/or stateless, to be under provisional protection of the United States and Great Britain until the conclusion of hostilities (or the signature of peace).

2. It would demand for this category the treatment accorded to all other national civilian internees in every civilized country; with full privileges.

3. It would then declare that henceforth any harm done to those protected persons would be classed as a State crime committed against Great Britain and U.S.A., apart from the personal guilt of individuals.

4. Finally there would be repeated broadcasts and leaflets on the lines of President Roosevelt's statement of 24 March.

5. Psychological Moment. As the certainty of our early victory is now spreading throughout Europe, new recruits for our purposes would arise everywhere.

6. Legal Aspect. In Italy Decree of November 1943 denationalised Italian Jews and declared them to be enemy subjects. When Premier Churchill offered British citizenship to the French in June 1940 most of France was already in the hands of Germany. Protection therefore can be declared even if it cannot be immediately effective.

This provisional protection, until armistice or peace, would place no added obligations on the protecting powers after that date.

7. Time Factor. I need not point out its urgency during this last crucial period when the Axis might indulge in a final orgy.

If proposal has new angle value, it is suggested special effort be attempted to place it before President and Premier while still together at Quebec.

8. This telegram is sent after considerable consultation with Representative War Refugee Board who has telegraphed Washington in similar sense.

6. Time Factor. I need not point out its urgency. These are the crucial weeks. During these Axis may attempt some signal holocaust. Once hostilities cease, the opportunity for extending protection to save these countless threatened lives has passed.

If therefore as an extreme step the proposal could be personally put before the President and Premier while still together at Quebec, and they thought fit to act, a declaration involving no vast machinery or war measures might result in the averting of a final tragedy for the Jews in Axis hands and in securing for them humane treatment pending their final liberation.

Bari, Italy
Displaced Persons Sub-Commission
June 22, 1944

Dear John,

As you can note facilities here are not of the best. Accordingly I have to write by hand and have no copies. When this scrawl has been deciphered and retyped please send me a copy for my files.

As I advised you in my last letter, preparations were made and orders issued from the Algiers end. Thereafter, on Sunday, June 19th, I left for Naples. On Monday, the 20th, I met various people at A.C.C. including Brigadier Hush, and it was then decided to concentrate the refugees at Averara (near Naples) on July 15th. Peninsular Base Section will take over from that point. Their officers had not yet received full details and appeared a bit flustered, the matter being entirely new to them. I went through with them the part that they would have to play and they promised full cooperation.

On Tuesday afternoon, June 21st, I reached Bari to find that the Displaced Persons Subcommission (which was to have the major job until embarkation) was packing up to leave for Rome the next morning. After some discussion with Lt. Col. Tothergill, it was decided that Capt. Korn (U.S.) repatriation officer of the sub-commission, was to remain behind to assist me along with Hartley of the AFSC and Perlman of the J.D.C., (the latter, incidentally, being sick and in the hospital). It now appeared for the first time that it will be a rush job to select and move the refugees by the deadline. They are spread out in a number of different camps and many do not live in camps but in nearby localities. It will therefore be necessary to make a flying motor tour about the countryside in order to inform the refugees of the matter and select them. Whether we collect 1000 at this time will depend upon the quickness with which they make up their minds and our ability to find out the situation in Rome. The latter place, alleged to contain about 2000 stateless refugees, is, as you can imagine, very much disorganized from a refugee point of view.

The plan is as follows:

Capt. Korn and I will visit Bari transit camp tonight. Tomorrow we leave for Santa Maria di Bogni (in the heel) to spend 2 days there. On Sunday we will be in Toronto in order to catch an already scheduled meeting of the refugee community. On Monday and Tuesday, (June 26 and 27) we will be at Ferramonte. In the meanwhile Hartley will go ahead of us to Toronto to spread the news of our arrival and will also go to Ferramonte for a few hours. Then he will spend several days in the Potenza area. The latter raises some different problems since there is no camp or central headquarters. The people are spread throughout villages in a 30 mile radius.

*Original in
Camp file*

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While we are thus engaged, Col. Tothergill has gone on to Naples and Rome. There he will work with Sir Clifford Heathcote Smith. As soon as we are finished down below, we will move up North through Naples and Rome. It will easily take us right up to the deadline to cover the entire area. In addition, it is not merely a question of announcing the program and getting immediate acceptances. The refugees (as we have already discovered) ask numerous questions -- the principal one being, whether they will be permitted to remain in the U.S. after the war if they have relatives there. We, of course, have had to answer this with an "I don't know". This may keep some refugees from going. Then, there are those who have a chance to go to Palestine. The local Zionist Committees are anxious to move as many as possible to that place. They are slightly opposed to our program insofar as it may affect persons who fit into Palestine qualifications (even though no Palestine certificates are now outstanding for Italy) as they along with other Zionist agencies are constantly bringing pressure on the British for more certificates. They are anxious to use up the quota now remaining as quickly as possible in order to reopen the whole quota question. The British, it seems, are just as anxious to dole out the certificates as slowly as possible to put off the day when they will have to reach a new decision. Whatever the situation, the Zionist groups may keep some of the people back. Then, there are people, who since the rapid advance in Italy think the war will soon be over and want to go North to try to find the other members of their families.

All in all, that part of the job, which seemed at first check to be the simplest -- the selection -- has turned out (so far) to be the most difficult. I think we are in for a busy three weeks which will keep us moving about rapidly. This, despite the assurances of G-5 in Algiers that selecting 1000 persons would be merely a matter of checking over a few lists.

In the short time that I have been here, in addition to preparing an announcement and planning our trip (changed five times before we settled on the schedule listed) I have seen a few of the O.S.S. people on the Yugoslav situation. They confirm that the military situation has been extremely bad for the last month and is just now starting to take a turn for the better. This may have influenced the small number of refugees coming out during this period. It certainly prevented Tito from aiding Hungarian refugees none of whom have come through. Whether the restriction order had any effect is something which I have been unable to determine. I will look into this whole

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matter further next week on my return. The O.S.S. advised me to keep away from the Parkians this weeks since the political situation is extremely complicated and confused at the moment.

I will try to keep you advised on developments as I go along. I may have to telephone Naples and ask them to cable you. I will also drop you letters, either via Army pouch, State Dept. pouch or V-mail as I go along. It will depend upon the facilities available. I enclose a copy of the preliminary announcement and application we are passing out. My first applicant was the refugee who made the translation into German. When he first read it he said that he wouldn't go because he would have to return to Europe and could not stay in the states. After he had made the translation he told me that he wanted to apply, adding that he had relatives in the States who would take care of him. I told him that we could give no guarantee on this point but he seemed willing to take his chances. I imagine that his attitude will be typical of many persons.

Otherwise than being subjected to an attack of bed bugs which wounded me almost to the extent of being entitled to the Purple Heart, there is nothing else to report at the moment.

Sincerely,

/s/ Leonard.

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DISPLACED PERSONS SUB-COMMISSION
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION.

June 20, 1944.

NOTICE AND APPLICATION.

The President of the United States has announced that approximately one thousand non-Italian refugees will be brought to the United States from Italy. The refugees will be maintained in a refugee shelter to be established at Fort Ontario near Oswego in the State of New York, where, under appropriate restrictions they will remain for the duration of the war. The refugees will be brought to the United States outside of the regular immigration procedure. The shelter will be equipped to take good care of the refugees and it is contemplated that they will be returned to their homes at the end of the war.

It is planned to select and move applicants for this refugee shelter as soon as possible. Preference will be given to those refugees for whom no other haven of refuge is immediately available. Therefore, if you desire to make application for admission please fill out the form below. Please use only one form for yourself and all members of your immediate family. Notification of acceptance for movement will be given as quickly as possible after your application has been received.

BEKANNTMACHUNG UND ANSUCHEN

Der President der Vereinigten Staaten hat bekanntgegeben dass annaeherns 1,000 Fluechtlinge nicht italienischer Nationalitaet aus Italien nach den Vereinigten Staaten gerracht werden. Die Fluechtlinge werden in einer in Fort Ontario, in der Nahe von Oswego, im Staate New York zu errichtenden Zufluchtsstaette unterhalten werden, woselbst sie, unter entsprechenden Einschränkungen, fuer die Dauer des Krieges bleiben werden. Die Fluechtlinge werden ausserhalb des regularen Einwanderungsvorganges nach den Vereinigten Staaten gebracht werden. Die Zufluchtsstaette wird so ausgestattet sein, um fuer die Fluechtlinge gut sorgen zu koennen und es ist beabsichtigt, dass sie beim Kriegsende in ihre Heimatlaender zurueckgebracht werden.

Es ist geplant, Bewerber fuer diese Zufluchtsstaette so rasch als moeglich auszuwaehlen und zu transportieren. Bevorzugt werden diejenigen Fluechtlinge, denen kein anderer Zufluchthafen zur Verfuegung steht. Fuehlen Sie daher das untenstehende Formular aus, wenn Sie ein Ansuchen um Zulassung einbringen wollen. Benuetzen Sie nur ein Formular fuer sich und alle Mitglieder Ihrer unmittelbaren Familie. Bekanntgabe ueber Ihre Annahme zum Transport wird Ihnen so rasch als moeglich nach Erhalt Ihres Ansuchens gegeben werden.

Full name of applicant.....

Age.....Birthplace.....Nationality.....Sex.....

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Members of Family
Name.

	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Birthplace</u>	<u>Nationality</u>
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Signature.

Present address.

6800/586/1,500/8-44.

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8 June, 1944

Dear John:

I advised you by cable on June 3rd that it was now anticipated that the ship from Spain should sail on or about the 25th of June. Sasseville of War Shipping told me that he felt there would be no slip-up on this occasion. However, on Sunday, June 4, he called me again and advised that the French wanted to use the ship to pick up some of their own refugees before carrying the Fedhala group. I told him that there was no question of the relative priorities and that, if necessary, I was prepared to use every means to see that the ship carried our group without further delay. He told me that he realized our position and would press it with the assistance of Gibson-Graham. Since then he has advised me that the ship should sail as scheduled unless some operational matter intervened.

As the term "operational" is one that can be interpreted very broadly, I decided to go further. I spent some time with Ambassador Murphy and finally prepared a draft of a letter for him to send to the Commander of Naval Forces in the Mediterranean area. Copies of this will be sent to all interested parties. It includes a copy of Ambassador Hayes' cable of May 31st (which did not arrive here until the 3rd and which was not finally decoded and distributed until the 5th) and closes with a request that no decision to cancel the projected voyage be made without prior consultation with Murphy. We both feel that the matter should now go through without further hitch unless a very high priority operational necessity intervenes.

Your cable No. 16 of June 1st raised the question of the admission of further Sephardics to Fedhala. I advised you sometime ago that Beckleman, at the same time he took up with Massigli the matter of the transfer of Fedhala to UNRRA, also broached the question of the limitation of applicants thereto. Massigli replied that the agreement was to accept 2,000 and that the French would live up to their agreement. Thereafter, Beckleman wrote a letter confirming this understanding and asked for a reply. No reply had been received when I left for Italy a few days later. On my return I discussed the matter with Selden Chapin who thereafter brought the matter up informally with one of Massigli's assistants. This assistant was not acquainted

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with the particular letter and asked for its date. This has been furnished to him and he has promised to look into the matter as quickly as possible. As soon as a further reply is received I will advise you. I do not anticipate that we will have any trouble on this in view of the original agreement and Massigli's expressed attitude thereon.

The only other matter on Fedhala is of a minor nature. The security check of the four women who were landed here from the Gripsholm has been completed. They are now temporarily billeted in a small hotel in Algiers. As soon as the check of the men is completed - probably in a few days - the whole group will be transported to Fedhala.

The developments on the Yugoslav situation are slightly confused at the moment. I had already advised you of the cable discouraging to some degree the movement of refugees from Yugoslavia to Italy. The reaction of the President, noted in State Department cable No. 1669 of May 27th and in the Army cable of June 4th, should help in this respect. We still, however, have not been completely successful. I think you will be interested in some of the details.

Just prior to leaving for Italy I met with Col. Spofford of the G-5 Section and discussed the entire matter. I presented to him various factors to back up my position that the restrictive order should be cancelled at once. He said that it would be modified shortly - as soon as some information could be secured on available evacuation sites in North Africa. At this time Mid East had already agreed to accept an additional 14,500 refugees.

On my return I found out that Mid East had changed its position slightly and now would only agree to accept up to 30,000 (an increase of only 4,500 in the quota) since there was a shortage of medical personnel. The quota will be increased to 40,000 as soon as the personnel is available. Later I was advised that consideration is also being given to the expansion of facilities in Italy proper since the North African sites may not be too good.

Yesterday, for the first time, I received figures that may indicate the effect of the restrictive cable. During four weeks in April and the first two weeks in May a weekly average of 1,350 refugees were brought out of Yugoslavia. The restrictive cable was sent out about ~~April~~ ^{May} 5th and since

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it takes several days for transmission and distribution, it would be normal to assume that its effect, if any, would not show up until the third week in May. The report for the week ended May 20 showed that only 370 persons arrived, and for the week ending the 27th the figure was 593. I immediately took this question up with Ambassador Murphy. He had been in Bari more recently than I and had talked with Sir Clifford Heathcote Smith of the I.G.C. and with General Velebit of the Partisan Yugoslavs. They reported nothing to him which would indicate that the refugee flow had been slowed up and it was his feeling that the intensified German attacks upon the Partisans may have been more responsible for the reduction in persons evacuated. He agreed, however, that the cable might have had some effect. He immediately called Col. Spofford who promised to cable at once to ascertain the reason for the diminution in arrivals. He also urged strongly upon Spofford a revocation of the restrictive order and that immediate steps be taken to provide evacuation areas so that the President's request might be met. Col. Spofford again raised the question of the lack of doctors which had caused the reduction in the Mid East quota and the statements by General MacFarlane that Italy at the moment could not take many more refugees unless he could be assured that they could be moved out rapidly. I pointed out to Mr. Murphy, and he in turn to Spofford, that Mid East could still take about 3,000 even under the reduced quota, and that Italy, which now held only 3,407 Yugoslavs, had at one time in April held 8,638. There was therefore a leeway of 8,000 at the present time (assuming that Italy can not hold more than 8 to 9,000 - which, of course, is poppycock). At the rate of 1,350 per week, there is a six weeks margin in which to find doctors for Mid East - (they only need a few), or to find additional sites in Italy or elsewhere. Ambassador Murphy, who is himself replying to the cable containing the President's request, has promised to keep after this matter, and with his aid I am sure that the present resistance to the refugee movement can be overcome.

I have discussed your cable No. 17 of June 5th with various persons, including Murphy and Saxon. We all agree that once the two matters discussed above have been properly arranged, that it would be more valuable for me to spend the major portion of my time in Italy. Jim Saxon, even though he has plenty of Treasury work on his hands, has agreed to follow up whatever has to be done here. Accordingly, I am starting to make arrangements to go to Italy for a substantial period. As soon as possible I intend to visit Rome to note developments there. I will, of course, also spend some time at Bari. The State Department is now completing arrangements for a Consular Office at Bari, and I am sure

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that Rome will also have its diplomatic office within a short time. I will thus be able to continue direct communication with Washington without going through the involved process of sending Army cables to Algiers and then having them repeated to Washington via the State Department. I expect to leave in a very short time and will only delay my departure if Jim Mann desires me to stay. I have cabled him at Lisbon asking whether he wishes me to await him in Algiers, or whether we can meet in Italy.

I am also making an effort to find doctors here among refugee groups. There were several Spanish refugee doctors available last year but they may be established by now and not want to go to the Middle East. Kimberland of the American Friends Service Committee, who does a lot of work with the Spanish groups, is following this up. Howard Brooks of the Unitarian Service Committee is also working on the medical angle. In the meanwhile I have located 3 medical assistants (also Spanish refugees) who are now working at an Army dispensary but who will be available for other jobs shortly.

As soon as I move on I will cable you my new address and will also keep you advised of my movements.

Sincerely,



Leonard E. Ackermann
Special Representative
Mediterranean Area
War Refugee Board

Mr. John W. Pehle
Acting Director
War Refugee Board
288½ Main Treasury Building
Washington 25, D. C.

(cont'd on p. 5)

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P.S. Since dictating the above I have been advised that the ship should arrive in Spain on the 20th instead of the 25th. A most immediate cable has been sent to Madrid advising them of this and asking them whether they can get ready within sufficient time. I assume that they can since on earlier occasions we were advised that ten days notice was necessary.

Larry Lesser in a personal letter asked me to question Gabby about a namesake of his now working at a university in Washington. Gabby states that he has never met the gentleman and personally knows nothing detrimental to him. When Gabby moved to Washington said professor sent word to Gabby through mutual acquaintances that he wished to meet Gabby, but the latter never contacted him as said professor was the chairman of the "American-Hungarian Society", a right wing Horthy-apologist organization. If you are looking for someone with whom to work, Gabby believes that there are more logical persons and suggests the following:

Dr. Jaszi, who is a friend of Mike Hoffman.

John D. Pelenyi, the former Minister to Washington who resigned rather than to represent Hungary when it joined the Axis.

John Biro, whom Gabby describes as a cultured gentleman and former editor of a liberal Hungarian paper. Biro's address may be found in the Queen's telephone directory or through Marie Kerekes.



L.E.A.

000784

Evac by Yugoslav Rep. - Secret

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JUN 26 1944

Dear Lent:

I am continuing to follow the Yugoslavian situation with much interest. I am extremely concerned about the AFIQ directive of May 5 discouraging the evacuation of refugees from Yugoslavia to Italy, and hope that by now it has already been rescinded. If this is not the case, please advise me by cable immediately, for as you know from our cable No. 1669 of May 27 for Ambassador Murphy's attention, the President has made it clear that under no circumstances should the flow of refugees from Yugoslavia be discouraged.

Meanwhile we shall do what we can to hasten the development of new refugee havens and the expansion of existing ones. I have in mind particularly the projects with which you are acquainted to develop new camps in Tripolitania and in the Philippeville area of Algeria and to expand refugee facilities in the UNRRA camps to a capacity of 40,000. I have just recently received a copy of the War Department cable from Algiers No. F-59229 of June 14, which points up fully the need for UNRRA cooperation in the latter two projects, which the Army states are absolutely essential if the rate of inflow of refugees from Yugoslavia is not to be curtailed sharply on account of the danger of overtaxing refugee facilities in Italy. I hope to see Governor Lehman on this matter in the next few days and should then be able to give you an idea of what can be expected of UNRRA.

We are considering here the problem of securing small boats capable of crossing the Adriatic. After discussing this problem with Mr. Kellock and Lt. Commander Becker, Assistant General Counsel of the War Shipping Administration, it is my opinion that as a preliminary step you should cooperate with Sasseville in examining fully the small boat situation in Italy in order to determine, among other things, the number of boats available in the area which are not presently being used in absolutely essential war work; the number of boats which could be made available after minor repairs, and the facilities in Italy for making such repairs. In this connection you will recall that Saxon reported that in April there were more than 200 small Italian schooners, for the most part in working order, tied up on the Adriatic coast and another 65 Partisan boats lying idle because of needed repairs.

In obtaining this background information, it will probably be advisable for you to confer also with Mr. John Holmes, who I understand, is the

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

Saxon p Mr. Kellock
file

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War Shipping Administration representative in Bari, and with Mr. Robert Nichols, who is the MREBO representative in Naples. Sasneville should be of help to you in contacting these men. Incidentally, Lt. Commander Becker would appreciate your conveying his personal regards to Nichols and Holmes.

After obtaining the above information, you will be able to formulate a specific request to MREBO for a priority with the assurance that your request, based on the above information, is a reasonable one. As soon as you have applied to MREBO for a priority, please notify me by cable and I shall ask the War Shipping Administration in Washington to exert strong pressure to your application.

Because of the refusal of the Germans to grant a safe-conduct for either the Turi or the Bergaland, the latter being a Swedish ship formerly engaged in Greek relief operations which the Board had been hoping to charter, Ambassador Steinhardt has apparently come to the conclusion that small boats operating without a German safe-conduct are the key to the Black Sea shipping bottleneck. Accordingly, he has had a talk with the Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Office with a view to inducing the Turkish authorities to authorize the use of a number of Turkish boats to transfer refugees from Balkan ports to Istanbul. The Secretary General stated his belief that it would be possible to find some means of meeting Ambassador Steinhardt's request and promised to look into the matter at once in order to ascertain what Turkish vessels were available, either in Balkan ports or at Istanbul, which the Turkish Government might be able to make available for the desired purpose.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Jim Saxon in Algiers.

Sincerely,


J. W. Fehle,
Executive Director.

Mr. Leonard M. Ackermann,
Special Representative of the
War Refugee Board,
c/o American Consulate General,
Naples, Italy.

000781

JUN 26 1944

Dear Lent:

I am continuing to follow the Yugoslavian situation with much interest. I am extremely concerned about the AFHQ directive of May 5 discouraging the evacuation of refugees from Yugoslavia to Italy, and hope that by now it has already been rescinded. If this is not the case, please advise me by cable immediately, for as you know from our cable No. 1669 of May 27 for Ambassador Murphy's attention, the President has made it clear that under no circumstances should the flow of refugees from Yugoslavia be discouraged.

Meanwhile we shall do what we can to hasten the development of new refugee havens and the expansion of existing ones. I have in mind particularly the projects with which you are acquainted to develop new camps in Tripolitania and in the Philippeville area of Algeria and to expand refugee facilities in the MENRA camps to a capacity of 40,000. I have just recently received a copy of the War Department cable from Algiers No. F-39229 of June 14, which points up fully the need for WHERA cooperation in the latter two projects, which the Army states are absolutely essential if the rate of inflow of refugees from Yugoslavia is not to be curtailed sharply on account of the danger of overtaxing refugee facilities in Italy. I hope to see Governor Lehman on this matter in the next few days and should then be able to give you an idea of what can be expected of WHERA.

We are considering here the problem of securing small boats capable of crossing the Adriatic. After discussing this problem with Mr. Kalleck and Lt. Commander Becker, Assistant General Counsel of the War Shipping Administration, it is my opinion that as a preliminary step you should cooperate with Sasseville in examining fully the small boat situation in Italy in order to determine, among other things, the number of boats available in the area which are not presently being used in absolutely essential war work, the number of boats which could be made available after minor repairs, and the facilities in Italy for making such repairs. In this connection you will recall that Saxon reported that in April there were more than 200 small Italian schooners, for the most part in working order, tied up on the Adriatic coast and another 65 Partisan boats lying idle because of needed repairs.

In obtaining this background information, it will probably be advisable for you to confer also with Mr. John Helmes, who I understand, is the

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War Shipping Administration representative in Bari, and with Mr. Robert Nichols, who is the NREBO representative in Naples. Sasseville should be of help to you in contacting these men. Incidentally, Lt. Commander Becker would appreciate your conveying his personal regards to Nichols and Holmes.

After obtaining the above information, you will be able to formulate a specific request to NREBO for a priority with the assurance that your request, based on the above information, is a reasonable one. As soon as you have applied to NREBO for a priority, please notify me by cable and I shall ask the War Shipping Administration in Washington to grant strong support to your application.

Because of the refusal of the Germans to grant a safe-conduct for either the Tari or the Bardaland, the latter being a Swedish ship formerly engaged in Greek relief operations which the Board had been hoping to charter, Ambassador Steinhardt has apparently come to the conclusion that small boats operating without a German safe-conduct are the key to the Black Sea shipping bottleneck. Accordingly, he has had a talk with the Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Office with a view to inducing the Turkish authorities to authorize the use of a number of Turkish boats to transfer refugees from Balkan ports to Istanbul. The Secretary General stated his belief that it would be possible to find some means of meeting Ambassador Steinhardt's request and promised to look into the matter at once in order to ascertain what Turkish vessels were available, either in Balkan ports or at Istanbul, which the Turkish Government might be able to make available for the desired purpose.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Jim Saxon in Algiers.

Sincerely,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle,
Executive Director.

Mr. Leonard E. Ackermann,
Special Representative of the
War Refugee Board,
c/o American Consulate General,
Naples, Italy.

*Original signed by
Mr. Pehle
Copy to: Mr. Saxe*

CG to James Saxon, Algiers, Algeria.

MJM:MS:bbk - 6/24/44

MJM ms

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DRAFT LEA 5/25/44

This is in addition to my letter of 24 May, and should be considered as strictly personal and confidential. I'm going to talk a little bit about politics even though I realize that it is your desire to keep the refugee problem separated therefrom as much as possible. I do this because I believe it would be helpful in understanding the Yugoslav situation.

When I was in Bari, one of the matters mentioned to me frequently was that the Americans had lost a good deal of their former prestige with the Yugoslav Partisans. Their former prestige was based on the admiration that many peoples of the world had for the ideals of the United States. In addition, there were in Yugoslavia, persons who had been in the States and returned, and many others with relatives there. We had, in the words of Wendell Wilkie, "an enormous reservoir of good will". Much of this appears to have been dissipated. In the first place I am told that we made the mistake of using the same people to make contact with the Chetniks and the Partisans. As a result, neither side trusted any of such persons. Secondly, the British are strongly in the picture and we are only in it faintly. Bari and the whole eastern coast of Italy is in British hands, except for some American Air Force Units. The latter did not make relations any better when some important Air force officers referred to some Partisan pilots, as "chetniks". The name "chetnik" had become fixed in the minds of such officers as synonymous with "Yugoslavia" because of the early exploits of Mihailovitch, and the American officers hadn't learned of the different groups which now co-exist in that country. The counter-intelligence corps of the Air Corps has attempted to remedy this by circulating a memorandum on recent Yugoslav history.

The same idea (loss of American prestige) was indicated in my discussion with Popovich who said that their people hardly ever saw an American. The liaison officers with Tito are almost entirely British, and the entire transit ~~and~~ system for Yugoslav refugees in Italy is for the most part run by the British. There

was an American colonel at the head of the Displaced Persons Subcommission but he has been replaced by a British colonel. When uniforms are given to the Partisan Army, they are British uniforms.

I do not mention all of the above to indicate a dislike of the British but merely to show that at the present, the British to some degree appear to be playing rather clever politics. They need to do this, incidentally, because in the early days they backed Mihailovitch in a big way but have now thrown him over and are, on the surface at least, backing the Partisans. Despite all this, the feeling between the Partisans and the British is probably not too good. This may be due to several reasons. First, their original backing of the Chetniks, second, the British stake in Yugoslavia, third, the British fear of communism, and fourth, the attitude of the Partisans.

The Partisans appear to be a rather proud and independent group. They have accomplished a lot militarily with very little outside aid and they appear to have popular support from Serbs, Slovenes and Croats, while all other movements seem to be limited to only one of the three groups. They are suspicious of the British for the reasons mentioned above, or possibly for other reasons. Whatever may be the reason, the Yugoslav attitude towards the British in operational matters seems to be: "Give us the supplies and we'll kill the Germans but don't ask us how we intend to do it or tell us how to do it." For example, against British advice and without British aid, they attacked (and did it successfully), the island of Dorgula. Another indication (although this may have been for personal reasons) was the fact that the British major assigned to me as liaison officer through whom I was to meet the foreign missions in Bari told me that it had taken him at least 20 phone calls over a period of several weeks to make an appointment with Popovich for Sir Clifford Heathcote-Smith. I therefore told him to let me try on my own and through Ensign Vuccinnich of the OSS made an appointment for the same day.

I briefly mentioned this matter in a talk with Murphy who said that his information was that we had no prestige in the Balkans, the British a very small amount and the Russians a great deal. He also said that, in his opinion, the British were in an ~~an~~ embarrassing position because of their complete about face but that while we had recognized the Royal Yugoslav Government we had not supported it strongly and that we now had a sort of passive attitude towards both sides. One of Murphy's sources of information which he showed me was a report of a British Liaison officer (forwarded via Brigadier McLean (British)). In my opinion (based on hearsay evidence and one meeting with the Partisan representatives - you can therefore weigh the evidence accordingly) this so-called standoff attitude engages both the Chetniks and Partisans. I believe, despite their distrust of the British, that the Partisans respect the British more. They feel they know where they stand with them; they don't know with us. I don't know either. One of the State Department men, when I ~~referred~~ mentioned Vucinich referred to him as a "former fellow traveler".

The O.S.S. is attempting to bring up American prestige (or at least some of its members are) by sending more people to Yugoslavia, and by selecting them more carefully. Major Goldberg, who has been extremely helpful to me, spent practically all of his time in Bari with one or more of the Partisan representatives. The efforts of Goldberg and others may aid our prestige with this group.

I have gone through this recital for several reasons. I believe that you are interested in the Yugoslav situation as a matter of general information, but I feel that it also has a direct bearing on our work. Since the British have control of the operations in this area, much of the aid that we might give will have to be cleared through them. They now control the movement of the Yugoslav ships and decide what supplies are to go into the area. When we "ran" the ship line, I am told that we tried to give the Partisans the type of supplies they asked

for, but the British send what they (the British) believe the Partisans ought to have. I am also informed that shipments have recently fallen off but only [^]a small percentage. This was attributed to the British slow method of doing things. It is fairly certain, however, that the British have made no effort to increase shipments. Despite Churchill's promise to send 9,000 tons of supplies per month, only slightly more than that amount has been shipped in a little under six months.

Thus I believe that in order to accomplish more than is now taking place - and a great deal is being done* - we will have to break through the present British policy. The question of American prestige is also involved because it may affect the Board's relations with the Partisans.

I think that I should advise you again that the information herein is based on talks had during a 3-1/2 days stay in Bari and must be weighed accordingly. Much of it was given to me in "off the record" interviews with various people who for obvious reasons cannot afford to be quoted or even admit that they gave me any information. I assume, therefore, that you will keep this information for your personal use.

I think that your letter of May 10th when you mention "getting our foot in the door" sums up the situation accurately. Having a board representative both here and in Italy will permit us to keep in touch with the situation at all times. We may be able to forestall efforts to slow up the present refugee movement from Yugoslavia of the type previously described by me. This movement even though only Yugoslavs are rescued is eminently worth while. Of course, I hope that more can be done. I do not believe the Army welcomes the movement and I know they never anticipated it. Yet they appear willing - albeit reluctantly - to permit it to continue so long as evacuation areas outside of Italy are provided.

Admiral Land's instructions to Kalloch while they may prove to be helpful are not enough. Kalloch will support a request to MEDBO for ships but even if this be granted the ships will sail

* 30,000 Yugoslavs have been evacuated in six weeks.

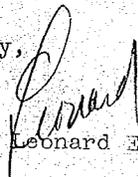
only with the permission of the Royal Navy. The A.S.S. might oppose more shipping because while they appear to be willing to accept the present flow - 3,000 to 4,000 a month - they don't want it increased. However, it appears to me just as important to bring aid into the country. Evacuation of all the Yugoslavs and Hungarians who want to come out is probably impossible, but if food and medical supplies are brought in, many lives can be saved.

As I told you, General MacFarlane is opposed to a stockpile, but thought should be given to this if not for the immediate future, at least for such time when more territory is liberated or when hostilities cease entirely. I know that UNRRA has plans along this line but ^{I have} no information on the actualities. The end of the war, I hope, is not too far away and stockpiles will be needed when that occurs not only for the Balkan area but for all of Europe. It would be my idea to provide such small stockpiles for emergency use in various points so that they will be available for use as soon as opportunity permits.

You asked for a formula whereby military and
and refugee aid can be separated. I have been
unable to devise one but believe that any aid,
whether military or refugee to the Partisans, will aid
not only refugees but also to hasten the end of the
war. All food brought in for refugees will release food for
the armies. All refugees brought out will similarly
simplify the food situation for the army and the
remaining civilian population. The shipment of more military
aid will kill more Germans and at the same time
provide more ships for refugee evacuation. This, in my
opinion, the two subjects are related, and cannot
be separated.

Since dictating this draft, I have had another conversation with Sasseville of the WSA. He told me that the matter had been fully discussed with Gibson-Graham of the MWT this morning and that it was his impression that matters were now proceeding at a sufficiently high level. He asked me whether we could supply pesetas for payment of port dues while the French ship was in Spain. My cable No. 24 asked you to take this up with the USCC and I assume that some action will have been taken by the time that this letter arrives. Sasseville stated that both Gibson-Graham and he were satisfied that they could arrange matters at a meeting with the French Naval authorities to be held later this week. He is hopeful that a definite date for sailing can be set. I am keeping my fingers crossed that this effort to secure a ship finally works out. The Fedhala proposal has been one difficulty after another but most of our problems have finally been worked out. I hope that the ship question is no exception ~~xxxxxx~~ this record of final success.

Sincerely,



Leonard E. Ackermann.

ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS

Civil Affairs Office

24 May, 1944

Dear John:

I have just returned from a trip to Naples and Bari during which I had an opportunity to make further inquiry into the situation of Yugoslav and other Balkan refugees. I will report on the various conversations I had in chronological order, and sum up at the end.

I first went to Naples where it was suggested that I should immediately call upon Gen. MacFarlane, the head of the ABC, and advise him of my plans in the area. MacFarlane, however was out, and it was therefore suggested that I go to see Sam Heber of the State Department. Heber, I learned, knew very little about the work of the Board. Accordingly I spent the first 15 minutes in explaining its functions and program. He stated that while he was sympathetic to the program, it appeared to him very difficult to do much more than was being done at the present time. He said that while it was necessary to aid the people in danger it would be impossible to bring out all of the refugees who wanted to come from Yugoslavia.

The next day I called again at Gen. MacFarlane's office and was advised by Lt. Col. Mumfort that I should first see Brigadier Lush, then go to Bari and on my return from Bari, discuss matters with Gen. MacFarlane. In my conversations with Brigadier Lush I again discovered that the work of the Board was not well known. I again spent a considerable amount of time in discussing not only the program of the Board in Italy but in other areas. He was interested in some of the other phases of our work, and in this connection when I told him that the Board in Washington was in contact with the Apostolic Delegation, he asked whether information could be obtained from them as to the location of refugee camps, refugee groups or other refugee problems that may be encountered as the Allied forces move further north in Italy. It was his understanding that there were not many camps or groups in the Rome vicinity, and he felt that they were all in the far north. However, he desired confirmation on this so that some planning could be done for future needs. If information along these lines can be secured, I am sure that Brigadier Lush will be most appreciative. He said that Italy was very crowded with refugees and that it was necessary to move them on to other points, if such other points could be found, in order that more refugees might be brought into Italy. He stated that if we were successful in effecting the rescue of Hungarian refugees, he could accommodate up to 2,000. I also discussed with him, on an informal

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basis (since I did not know whether or not Algiers had forwarded the cable received with reference thereto) the proposed appointment of John Lawler as War Refugee representative in Bari. He said that he would have no objection thereto, provided that Lawler would coordinate his work with the Displaced Persons Subcommittee of the Allied Control Commission. He also made a phone call to Bari to advise them that I would be over and gave me a letter to Col. Findlay, the head of the Displaced Persons Subcommittee.

I later talked to Ed Foley and John Lawler about the proposal. Ed said that he would be sorry to lose Lawler since he considers Lawler to be his No. 2 man but that he had not been asked about the matter and would have to wait until it was presented to him officially.

On the next day I reached Bari where I met Col. Findlay. He showed me the letter written by Brig. Lush which introduced me as representative of the President's War Refugee Board and stated that its purpose was to save persecuted people. The letter went on to state that it would be my job to bring persons out of occupied territory but it would then be the job of the Displaced Persons Subcommittee to care for them once they arrived. The letter further stated that he had agreed to accept up to 2,000 Hungarian refugees and asked that all appointments for me to see foreign missions be arranged through Col. Findlay. We then had a very brief discussion which was joined in by Sir Clifford Heathcote-Smith of the Intergovernmental Committee as to practical methods of effecting such rescue. They had no concrete suggestions to offer and asked me for my plans. I told them that I knew that shipping and supplies would help but that I was only in a position to make recommendations as to these, and that the only firm assistance I could give at the moment would be in the form of money. All agreed that this was less useful than actual supplies but that it might help.

I next saw the repatriation officer of the Displaced Persons Subcommittee. He gave me some information on the Jews in Allied occupied Italy. There are about 5,000 of them at the present time. Most are stateless and the greater part of them were already in Italy at the time of the Allied landings. About 1,000 of this group are Yugoslavs, the balance being principally Czechs, Poles, Austrians, and Germans, with a few Hungarians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, and Russians. The majority of the Yugoslav Jews now in Italy apparently want to return to Yugoslavia when hostilities cease. Amongst the other groups the greatest desire is to emigrate to Palestine. However, at the moment there have been only 300 certificates issued for admission to Palestine.

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As these certificates included certain dependents, it will permit the emigration of about 580 persons. At the present time, there is no official estimate of the number of additional certificates that may be issued.

I also discussed the proposal of moving 750 of the stateless Jews to Fedhala. As I have already advised you, this had been informally discussed shortly before I left for Italy. At that time I had the impression that a specific list of 750 had been picked but I was advised that this was merely the number of persons whom they wanted to move and that no specific list had been picked. It was felt, however, that the list would probably be picked from those who did not desire to go to Palestine.

Since my return I have received your cable No. 8 of May 11, recommending that the Fedhala quota of 2,000 should not be entirely filled with refugees brought from Italy. I took this into consideration in the early discussions and cabled Schwartz for the number of Sephardics still in France that might be rescued. He advised me that there were 50 at Perpignan, another 300 in Germany and 100 more in Greece. The cable also stated that an effort was being made to transport the 300 in Germany to Palestine via Greece and Istanbul; but that even if 770 persons now come from Spain and 750 from Italy, there would be room for the Sephardics. I realize that there may be others whom we may want to bring from Spain to the camp besides the Sephardics and will bear this factor in mind. Schwartz should arrive here tomorrow and Beckelman will be down in a few days. There is also to be a joint British American meeting on the question of the transfer of the camp to UNRRA and the Italian question on Saturday. At that time I expect the whole matter will be thrashed out.

To return now to my Italian trip. I next met with Major Torielli and Mr. Joyce of the Special Balkan Service the latter being a branch of the OSS. They told me that the OSS could not do very much in the way of assisting our program since it was principally an intelligence agency of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, but that if I talked to some of their people in Algiers, I probably could keep in touch with information on the Yugoslav situation. They felt, however, that much of this would not concern refugee questions. They asked me whether I proposed to deal with the Partisans or the Chetniks and I told them about the statement by Marshal Tito to the effect that he would aid Hungarian Jews. Torielli had previously told me that at times some of the O.S.S. activities verged on the political since if they aided one group, the other group might be insulted. Joyce, however, stated that this situation should not prevail at the

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present time since no aid ^{is} now being given to the Chetniks, while aid is being given to the Partisans because they are the people who are presently interested in killing Germans. I also talked to several other people at the O.S.S. and elsewhere and got a little clearer picture of the movements of supplies and ships between Italy and Yugoslavia. In the early days the O.S.S. itself supervised the shipment of supplies to Yugoslavia on ships owned and manned for the most part by the Partisans. A number of these ships on their return trips carried refugees. As of a recent date, however, all of this activity has been taken over by the British counterpart of O.S.S. In some cases the return ships bring back refugees; in other cases, they do not. I could not ascertain from the OSS people whether or not the cable directing that no refugees be transported except in cases where life was in danger, had had any appreciable effect on this movement.

Thereafter I went to see Col. Milentye Popovich who at the time was the chief representative of the National Committee of the Yugoslavs. I was sorry that I could not get to see Dedjer who is their chief representative but he was in a hospital in Naples. Popovich could not give me much in the way of definite information as to Tito's proposal to aid the Hungarians. He said that to some degree this would depend upon their receipt of additional supplies and equipment. I asked him whether or not the sum of \$50,000 in lire would be useful in aiding the rescue or relief of refugees in occupied territory. He replied in the affirmative. He said he could not at the moment give me a definite plan for the use of the money but by the time the money was received, he would have a plan ready and that after the money had been used, he could report in greater detail as to its actual disposition. He asked me whether or not I could aid in getting additional clothing, food and equipment for the assistance of the refugees. I told him that this matter had to be discussed in higher circles and that as far as I was concerned, I could only make recommendations and not issue orders. He also brought up the question of establishing a stockpile in Italy for the purpose of rushing immediate aid to Yugoslavs and other Balkan refugees at such time when a portion of the coast would be open. He said that a few months before the Partisans had held possession of a portion of the coast and hoped that it could be done again some time in the near future. It was his opinion that if such a stockpile were immediately available, much more in the way of aid to refugees could be given.

I spoke to a number of other people, including some members of the U.S. Counter Intelligence Corps, who had interested themselves in the Yugoslav problem. The general impression seemed

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to be that the Partisans are doing a tremendous job with the facilities available to them, that they are very much interested in the refugee problem and that they constitute the only organization which can effectively aid refugees in occupied territory. I asked whether they could be trusted to use funds given to them for genuine refugee purposes and in all cases but one, received an affirmative answer. In this one case the man merely refused to express an opinion thereon. I also learned that all Partisan ships that now sail, do so under the supervision and with the consent of the Royal Navy, and that the Partisans, although they man the ships, do not select the sailing dates or places to which they are going. At the present time very little is getting into Yugoslavia proper since the bulk of the shipments are military supplies which are being used to fortify the Island of Vis. The general impression also seemed to be that the Americans in the early days had done a slightly better supply job than the British are doing at present. This may be due to several factors, first that the Americans in general work a little faster than the British; second, that the Americans at times had the opportunity to run the ships all the way to the Yugoslav coast and did not have to stop at the Island of Vis, and third, because there were more boats which were in better repair in the early days.

The next day I visited a transient camp which is used as a reception center for refugees when they arrive. I examined the entire establishment and saw the method in which it was operated. I will only mention several details here which bear upon our problem. This camp principally handles the arrivals from Yugoslavia. The people when they arrive are usually in horrible shape, some of them looking like animals. After being fed, bathed and deloused, they look tremendously better but are still an emaciated group. I went into the kitchen which was crowded with women who had been evacuated only two days before. In discussing their situation with the British sergeant in charge, I was informed that some of them had not seen bread or flour for two or more years, and that these women were extremely happy and anxious to assist in preparing the food, especially when flour was used. He said that for several years large numbers of them had subsisted principally on weeds, wild animals and almost anything that they could find, but they had little in the way of regular food. The information which he gave me confirmed the fact which had also been told me by Joyce of the OSS to the effect that unless substantial amounts of food are brought into Yugoslavia before next winter, not only will large numbers of the population die, but that the troops which now get the best selection of food will not be in fit condition to fight.

I again met with Col. Findlay and discussed the problem generally. He told me that he had been to Vis for the two previous days and had talked with some of the Partisan representatives.

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He referred to the order that had been issued restricting the movement of refugees as "that unfortunate telegram" but did not believe it had had much of an adverse effect as yet, because, as he said, the cable had a loophole in it, providing for the rescue of all those persons in immediate danger of death. He had sent word to Tito about the restrictive order but had also advised him that about 6,000 more persons could be accommodated until such time as additional facilities are made available either in the Middle East or in North Africa. He agreed that some of the people commanding the ships might restrict the movement but that others might not. He thought that the idea of establishing a stockpile earmarked for the Yugoslavs was an excellent idea, and said that while money would help, it was not as good as actual supplies. He could give no estimate of the number of refugees, Yugoslavs or others, that might arrive in the near future. Warm weather, he said, made travel easier on the other hand, and as the nights were shorter, it would be more difficult to evacuate persons by boat. Some persons, he felt, might take a chance and stay in the region despite starvation conditions, as a few crops were growing and might be used.

The next day I returned to Naples and had lunch with Gen. MacFarlane, his British and American aides, and Harold Caccia of the British Foreign Office. He very plainly told me that his principal interest in our affairs was that we should not create a problem that would be too big for his Displaced Persons Sub-commission to handle. I told him about the various proposals now under way to provide for evacuation areas outside of Italy. It was his thought that the problem could be handled if the flow out of Italy could keep pace with the influx. He warned that we should be careful not to create refugees. He said that the Yugoslavs wanted to get as many people as possible out of the country so as to save food for those who remained. I told him about the atrocity stories related to me by General Velabit and confirmed by others and about the condition of the refugees on their arrival. I am not sure that I convinced him.

I then mentioned to the General the suggestion concerning the stockpile. His reply was that this was out of the question and that no material could be earmarked for any group in Italy since supplies were short in the entire area. He said that he could not set aside any food or other items for a group which might or might not be able to use it since the Italian population at the present time was living on an under-subsistence ration. If there was any surplus, it was his intention to increase the Italian ration. I then asked him whether or not he had received word concerning the appointment of Lawler as WRB representative. He told me that he had received this cable and

had replied to it. It was his position that there was no objection to having a representative of the Board in Bari but that Lawler could not be the man. He told me that Lawler was in charge of the Salerno office, had just been appointed as Secretary to a new and important committee and was too important to the war effort in his present position to be spared.

I had previously talked to Foley and Lawler before meeting with Gen. MacFarlane and at that time they had no knowledge of the General's refusal to release Lawler. Ed^{Ward} told me that while he was not entirely displeased with the result since he needed Lawler's assistance a good deal, he was sorry that it could not be worked out in accordance with your wishes. He suggested that possibly Fiedler or Fraser or both of them be sent over as representatives of the Board. He felt that they were acquainted with the area and had sufficient rank to be able to be effective. It was also felt that someone in uniform would be able to go into Yugoslavia more easily. Lawler finally stated that a member of the Navy would probably be more effective since many of the discussions in Bari might take place with representatives of the Royal Navy.

He also suggested that if a Navy man is sent, his orders should go through NAWBASE (Naval Headquarters in the North African Area) as a man thus assigned would be in a position to get many small necessary items through the Navy, i.e., clerical help, transportation, etc., or preferably that a Navy man bring his own yeoman along.

On my return from Italy, I discussed these matters fully with Robert Murphy. The cable announcing that I was attached to him had just arrived and he stated that he was willing that I be made a part of his staff for matters which were not purely North African. He is arranging that I see all of the cables affecting the problem and has promised to give me as much assistance as possible. I immediately asked for such assistance on another matter which I will discuss after I have summed up on the Yugoslav situation.

My conclusions thereon are the following:

(1) As far as the Army is concerned there seems to be little further assistance that they will give to an added influx of refugees into Italy. As someone expressed to me previously they never expected the Yugoslavs to be a refugee problem and the matter fell into their laps without warning. They have now worked out a procedure which has aided in the removal of approximately 30,000 people, and will continue to aid this movement provided the continuous flow of refugees out of Italy can be maintained. I do not believe, however, that they will take any additional steps to accelerate this movement or to provide ships or supplies for additional evacuations since they feel that the present movement is as much as they can handle. As you know from messages

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previously sent you they already took steps to slow up the movement but I feel that under present circumstances this type of restriction will not have to be reimposed for some time. I hope that as time passes military events will make the evacuation of substantial numbers of refugees unnecessary.

(2) I cannot advise you on the present rescue possibilities of refugees other than Yugoslavs through existing facilities. I may have more information on this in the near future. I understand also that discussions have been held between the British and the Yugoslavs in Cairo, but I do not have any information thereon other than the mere fact that discussions have been held. I believe that the sum of \$50,000 should be given immediately to the Partisan groups to see what they can do to aid these other groups and also to aid the Yugoslavs themselves since the latter are also proper objects of our aid. The Yugoslavs, in my opinion, constitute the only escape organization that exists. There is no time and there are no facilities to establish another organization. I understand that on the part of the British, at least, there may be some opposition to the Yugoslavs aiding the escape of other refugees since they believe that airmen and military personnel should have priority. However, if more in the way of both military and civilian supplies are brought into Yugoslavia, it may be possible that both movements can take place simultaneously. It is very difficult to separate the military and the refugee situations. I believe, however, that aid in refugee matters should not interfere with military matters but should be of assistance since the evacuation of refugees will ease the military situation to some degree. In addition, even if refugees are not evacuated out food is brought in to starving groups this may release other food supplies for the military. The Yugoslavs, of course, are giving priority in food-stuffs to their army but I do not believe that they intend to let their civilian population starve, and are making an effort to provide for civilians at least to the extent of very small amounts. There is also the further element to refugee aid stated in Marshal Tito's telegram to the effect that able-bodied persons evacuated from other Balkan countries will provide additional manpower for his fighting forces.

(3) I believe that someone in uniform, provided he has sufficient rank, could be most effective in representing the Board at Bari. It will make a trip into Yugoslavia much simpler. If I have to go into this area - and I am perfectly willing to do so, if necessary - it will be necessary for me to go through a number of formalities such as the procurement of a uniform and the granting of assimilated rank. It would be too dangerous to go in civilian clothes because of the fact that it is a very fluid zone and capture by the enemy must be considered. I do not know what the difficulties are in acquiring assimilated rank but I was informed by Robert Murphy that it could possibly be arranged. On the other hand, I feel it is important to have representatives both in Algiers and in Italy, since activity

with reference to the Balkan refugee movement takes place in both areas. In addition, there are the Fedhala problems in Africa and I shall discuss them next.

When I returned from Italy I discovered that the boat which should have gone to Spain between the 15th and 20th of May had been sent on another short trip. This was due to another misunderstanding. It is necessary to give the people in Spain at least 7 days notice in order that the refugees might be collected from the various parts of Spain where they are located. In this instance the boat was ready to sail prior to the 15th but no one was advised thereof until the day it was to sail. Cables were sent to Spain but it was too late to make the necessary arrangements. The proposed new date of sailing is now June 7th and I will keep in constant touch with the situation in order to make sure that the same type of slip-up does not occur.

The other matters concerning Fedhala which you no doubt will have heard of by this time, have to do with the closing of the Atlantic Base Section, which was to supply food and a small amount of personnel to the camp. The supply situation has been straightened out and I am now assured that the camp will receive its supplies from another source which will be adequate. The personnel situation is still somewhat snarled. There is a large amount of government property at the camp and it is necessary that guards be maintained. Since the Atlantic Base Section will move, it was intended to remove all personnel, including the Italian service troops which had been assigned to guard the camp. I had a discussion about this with Robert Murphy who called up Gen. Sawbridge, after which it was suggested that I meet with the General. I had a meeting on 23 May with the General, and another that afternoon with Col. Ennis, who is his executive officer. It appears that the Army felt it cannot give any manpower assistance to the camp and would like to transfer all of the responsibility to UNRRA. I advised him that UNRRA was not running the camp as yet and that it had declined to assume responsibility unless it was assured of certain aid. I was told that the Army's former promise of assistance had been based on the understanding that the camp would be opened earlier in the year and at that time it was contemplated that there would be sufficient manpower available; that the lapse of time and changed circumstances had made this change in attitude necessary. After some discussion an agreement was finally reached whereby the Army would continue to maintain the guards there for a short time more until at least, Beckelman had an opportunity to come to Algiers and discuss the possibility of securing other types of guards. Just how this will work out, I do not know, but every effort will be made to straighten the matter out satisfactorily.

I also received a sudden call several days ago to come to the "Gripsholm", which was being used for the exchange of prisoners of war. I learned when I arrived there that there were three families of stateless refugees aboard who had been

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received in the exchange and which the State Department did not wish to transport to the United States. They should have been disembarked in Barcelona but instructions were received too late for this. After a fair amount of discussion it was arranged with the security authorities that they would take charge of these refugees until they had been thoroughly screened and that thereafter, they would be transported to the camp at Fedhala.

I have considered the possibility of using Gabby for this work but we both feel that with his present rank it would be difficult for him to be effective. Even as a 2nd Lieutenant that situation would not be too much improved. He might be more effective, with or without a commission, if put in civilian clothes and sent to a neutral country, assuming of course, that this can be arranged with the War Department.

Sincerely,

Leonard
Leonard E. Ackermann
Special Representative -
Mediterranean Area, WRB

Mr. John W. Fahle,
Acting Director,
War Refugee Board,
Washington, D. C.

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ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS

Civil Affairs Office

24 April, 1944

Dear John:

I am enclosing herewith the second memorandum forwarded to us by the Yugoslavs, together with two memoranda from OSS personnel. These are the same documents which are referred to in my cable No. 14 as being forwarded to you through the OSS in Washington.

I don't think it is necessary for me to repeat the various statements made in these memoranda or in the memoranda recently forwarded to you by Jim. But I think you will be interested in one of the statements made to Jim and myself by General Velebit at our meeting on April 22nd. He again went over the principal problems involved, emphasizing the fact that fast boats were needed, and then told us that he had requested the Special Balkan Service in Italy for \$50,000 a month for the repair of Yugoslav ships. The Special Balkan Service, to whom he made this request, had given him only \$15,000, stating that they were afraid that anything more would be used for subversive purposes. General Velebit said that in view of what the Yugoslavs have done, it was disheartening to be treated in this manner and to have to ask for funds from various sources. He said that his present trip had two principal purposes. The first was to secure, if possible, a few airplanes to be used for the transport of personnel and supplies. He stated that Tito now controls at least five fields at which landings can be made. He also said that he was making an effort to secure one large loan so that he would not have to beg for small amounts of money from various sources.

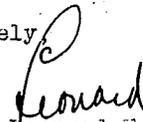
I think the problem comes down to this: The Yugoslavs, along with all other groups in Italy, are a claimant agency for the facilities, services and supplies available there. Up to the present they have not been well treated. I believe it requires strong representations to the Combined Chiefs of Staff to change this situation. It is the opinion of both Jim and myself that even a minimum amount of aid will be of terrific assistance because with practically no assistance at the present time the Yugoslavs have done wonders, both

*John from Mr. Friedman
pls*

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from a military point of view and in the aid of refugees. I do not know to what extent they can aid the Hungarians and Rumanians, but certainly they can be in no position to be of any help in this direction unless they receive some supplies and assistance. I realize that at the present time the demand on all sources of supplies for other areas is very great, but the amount required to aid the Yugoslavs is very small in comparison, and with a little I believe much can be done.

Sincerely,



Leonard E. Ackermann
Special Representative
Mediterranean Area
War Refugee Board

Mr. John W. Pehle
Acting Director
War Refugee Board
288½ Main Treasury Building
Washington 25, D. C.

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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION
1344 Connecticut Avenue
Washington 25, D. C.

25 July 1944

Major General John H. Hilldring
Chief, Civil Affairs Division
War Department
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear General Hilldring:

Your office has very kindly referred to us informally paraphrase of War Department cables WARK62209 and FX72717, with reference to UNRRA's participation in the North African refugee project. I am very glad to submit the comments which follow, although as you know I have not as yet received reply to my letter addressed to you under date of 22 June on the same subject.

I shall discuss the several matters in the same sequence as the paragraphs are numbered in cable No. FX72717.

1. At the time of my original communication it was felt that UNRRA would require for a time, pending our ability to replace them, a limited number of military medical personnel in the event 10,000 refugees were moved immediately to the Middle East to bring the total for Yugoslavs to 40,000. In the meantime advice has come from our office in Cairo that we are now prepared to take care of the agreed total of 40,000 without requiring supplementary medical personnel from the military.

2. Paraphrase of FX 72717 makes no reference to the understanding that the Middle East quota of 40,000 will be filled before the Phillipville project would become a responsibility of UNRRA. When it becomes possible for you to reply officially to my letter of 22 June, I hope you will be in position to confirm this understanding.

In this connection, however, I should inform you that our representatives in Cairo, on the basis of the information at hand there, have suggested the strong probabilities that our capacity in the Mideast can be expanded to take care of refugees to the point where the Phillipville project may not be necessary, provided the military would furnish for a short time pending our ability to replace them, a small number of additional personnel and the necessary tentage. I am advising our office in Cairo that you are being informed of this point of view, and although I personally consider it to have substantial merit, the overall situation has implications peculiarly military, and therefore must be a matter for military decision.

(a) I would suggest that this paragraph would need some clarification. As I have stated so frequently in our discussions, UNRRA is presently without a supply line to North Africa, is dependent upon the military for shipping and transportation, and therefore must rely completely upon the military for a continuing supply until alternative arrangements can be made. The terms suggested in my original communication are, I believe somewhat broader than those which might be interpreted in FX72717.

(b) I believe this paragraph also needs clarification. In the event a 600-bed hospital is actually necessary, it will require a much larger technical staff than can possibly be recruited within the area, or from the refugees themselves. The estimates of our Health Division of the personnel for this facility are a minimum of 80.

Although mentioned previously in my conversations with you and Assistant Secretary McCloy, I must again emphasize the problems with which all of us are faced at the moment in respect to the recruitment of appropriate medical and nursing personnel. In the United States, demands for doctors and nurses is particularly serious in that practically every civilian hospital in the country, I am told, is operating with a nursing staff that has been depleted to actually dangerous proportions. As serious as the situation is in the United States, the shortages of medical personnel are even more acute in the other countries to which we may turn for help.

It is for these reasons that I can do no more than restate our original position, namely, that we see no possibility of providing the full complement of medical and nursing personnel by 1 October. We are prepared to furnish a chief physician and a chief nurse immediately, and I repeat we will of course exert every effort to replace, from our own resources, the military personnel originally assigned as rapidly as possible, but it will be impossible for us to make any substantial replacements before 1 October and certainly we cannot guarantee to provide complete replacements before 1 January 1945.

Because of the difficulties not only in recruitment but also in effecting necessary transportation arrangements to the field, I am sure that you appreciate as I do the importance of reaching an early decision on the matter as a whole, in order that we can give continued assurances that the commitments which we made on 22 June can be met.

(c) No comments.

(d) FX72717 refers to "203 ton vehicles". I assume this is a typographical error and actually means 20 three-ton vehicles.

(e) No comments.

(f) No comments.

(g) No comments.

3. (a) The arrangements made with Marshal Tito in respect to pay of Yugoslav soldiers would not in any way conflict with UNRRA's policy. E.F.I. tokens can be made a legitimate charge against UNRRA.

(b) No comments.

(c) No comments.

(d) No comments.

(e) In the event a decision is reached fairly promptly that UNRRA is to participate in the project under the general conditions that are within our mutual competence, then I believe we can provide the 20 technical and administrative personnel by 1 October, assuming of course that the military will make available promptly the necessary transportation.

(f) FX72717 is satisfactory in respect to guards, but I am compelled to again emphasize our position in respect to the bulk of the medical, nursing and other operational personnel.

4. No comments.

5. I would assume that such transient camps as may be necessary at ports of embarkation or elsewhere in transit will be a military responsibility. I would be glad if you could confirm this understanding.

6. If the personnel for maintenance and administration include only the 20 persons referred to earlier, then we would have no comments.

7. UNRRA can provide small payments to refugees within existing UNRRA policy.

8. Assumption is correct.

9. This matter is not within the jurisdiction or immediate interest of UNRRA except that we would hope that such funds as the refugees may have would be in the currency of the country in which they will reside.

I trust these comments will be useful to you in the attempt to bring the matter to some satisfactory conclusion at the earliest date possible. Let me again assure you of our cooperation to the extent of our capacity.

Sincerely,

/s/ Herbert Lehman

Director General

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~~TOP SECRET~~

REPORT TO MR. JOHN W. PEHLE, ACTING DIRECTOR WAR
REFUGEE BOARD, CONCERNING REFUGEE QUESTIONS IN
THE BALKANS AND RELATED MATTERS.

Upon his return from Naples Harold Glasser immediately suggested that I go to Bari to investigate the Balkan refugee question and to explore the possibilities of enlarging present activities in this field with the assistance of Marshal Tito and the Yugoslavian Partisans. Glasser called Hoffman, Ackermann and myself together to discuss the question and the necessary preparatory steps. Glasser suggested that we call on General Devers to ascertain the views of himself and of his staff towards prospects for enlarging the activities of the War Refugee Board in the Balkans, and it was decided that we should see Devers at once.

In the course of the conversation with Devers, it was clear that if he had seen the President's statement and the directive of the Secretary of War on the subject, he had not noted these documents very carefully. However, Devers seemed to display a sympathetic attitude and called in Major General Noce, who, he said, along with General Caffey, had detailed information on the problem. It developed that General Noce was not well acquainted with the matter and he called in General Caffey. General Caffey talked at length about the insuperable difficulties involved and concluded with the statement that there was absolutely nothing which AFHQ could do under the circumstances to assist in any of the projects. Harold Glasser thereupon asked Generals Noce and Caffey if they would object if I were sent to Bari to explore the problem at first hand. As this was a request which Noce and Caffey would have been embarrassed to refuse, they agreed.

Upon return to the office Glasser told me to arrange immediately for my transportation. There was then some discussion between Glasser and Hoffman as to whether Hoffman could let me go to Bari without prior authority from Washington, and whether Glasser had any authority to order me to go to Bari. Glasser emphasized the necessity for immediate action. It was finally agreed that I should go and that Ackermann and Hoffman should both send cables informing the War Refugee Board and Treasury what was being done.

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. Letter, 4-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date ~~SEP 27 1972~~

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I arrived in Bari Friday afternoon, March 31, and immediately tried to contact Brigadier Miles (British), who is in charge of the Balkan operations. These efforts were unsuccessful. There was no central directory of telephones or of personnel. It developed that the Allied Control Commission had its own directory, the 15th Air Force its own directory, etc. It also proved impossible to obtain any information from the Information Center. That evening at dinner, however, I had the good fortune to meet Joseph Morton of the Associated Press whom I had come to know well at Dakar. I discussed my problem at length with Morton, who had already spent some time in Bari and who knew the situation rather well. Morton then suggested the names of persons whom he thought were closer to the problem than the persons whose names I had, and he thereupon arranged certain appointments.

The following morning I called on Captain Ramsey, formerly of the Treasury and now representative of the Allied Financial Agency in Bari. I discussed the problem at length with him but found that he had no information to offer. I asked him if he had received any directions to extend financial assistance in accordance with FAN 347 of March 15, 1944. Ramsey said that he had not seen any cables relative to this matter.

I then called upon Col. Kirkwood, who is in charge of the Displaced Persons Sub-commission of the Allied Control Commission. I interrogated Col. Kirkwood about the movement of people from Yugoslavia and coastal islands into Italy, treatment of refugees in the camps in Italy, and the difficulties encountered in the movement of refugees from Italy to other points.

Col. Kirkwood stated that roughly 17,000 people have come to Italy, mainly from the coastal islands, since December 1, 1943. He said that most of these people were brought over by the Allied Special Naval Service and had been evacuated for reasons of military necessity. According to Kirkwood most of the refugees now arriving were orphans, elderly men and women, and the seriously sick and injured. He said that able-bodied young men and women were assimilated into the Partisan military organization.

In view of Kirkwood's statements I inquired whether there was any general policy toward evacuation of refugees. Col. Kirkwood replied that it has been and is the policy

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|| not to encourage evacuation but to accept those who come, brought particularly either by the Allied Naval Service in order to clear the islands for military operations, or brought by their own efforts. I cited that if this were the policy it certainly was not consistent with the directive from the President, as set out in the order creating the War Refugee Board, or with the directive of the Secretary of War. Kirkwood stated that he had not seen either of these documents in their original form but had read a summary of the President's statement in the local press. He added that he was not establishing the policy toward the removal of refugees and that his concern was with the refugees once they arrived in Italy. I asked him whether in his opinion it would be possible to expand the evacuation of refugees. He stated that he could answer this question only from the viewpoint of its impact on his specific problem. He said that various camps in Southern Italy could accommodate a maximum of 15,000 people at their present capacity, that at present there were about 4 or 5,000 people actually being accommodated in the camps, and that he was therefore in a position to take an additional 8 or 9,000 people at a maximum. I pointed out that the problem therefore had two aspects in his sphere: (1) Expansion of existing facilities, if necessary, and (2) continued outflow of persons from the camps to other areas.

Kirkwood pointed out that his camps were not operated as concentration camps but that considerable privileges were granted. Refugees who could support themselves were permitted freedom from the camps; refugees who could find employment were permitted to leave the camps; there was no insistence that refugees not falling into the above categories should remain at all times within the camps. (In this connection one should note the difference between the manner in which the Fedhala camp is to be operated and the manner in which the camps in Italy are being operated). Kirkwood stated that he would not handle the job if any other attitude were employed. He then pointed out that the freedom enjoyed by the refugees in his camps sometimes made it difficult to encourage further movement of peoples out of Italy where refugees realize they would be moving into a less attractive situation. He said that about 15,000 people have already been moved out to the Mideast of which 3,800, largely Yugoslavs, had been sent to MERRA at the end of March. He said that there was no real difficulty in arranging transport between Italy and other areas.

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Kirkwood stated that there were roughly 1,500 Jews now in the camps in Italy who could be moved as soon as Palestinian certificates were made available. Kirkwood stated that a real contribution could be made to the solution of his problem if we could arrange for the speedy availability of these certificates. Kirkwood stated that his camps had originally been set up to take care of those whom the Italians had interned for political and racial reasons. He mentioned that figures he had given me did not include any people who were at large in Southern Italy for one reason or another.

Kirkwood stated that the average inflow of people was about 200 per day. Approximately 5,000 people arrived in February, 1944. The number which arrived in March was substantially less because of the change in the military situation and because a great number of people had already been evacuated from the islands, mainly for military reasons. Although a group of about 270 arrived on March 31, Kirkwood pointed out that with the reoccupation by the Germans of the Island of Rab and certain other islands along the coast, and with the increased patrol activity of the Yugoslav coast, it had become now much more difficult for people to get out or be brought out. Kirkwood, however, emphasized that the military situation in the Balkans was extremely fluid.

Kirkwood stated that various emigre governments had now attached missions to him to look after their own refugees. He mentioned the Rumanian mission, the Greek, the Polish, etc. I asked him how these missions were being supported and he said their expenses were being supplied by the Allied Financial Agency.

Kirkwood mentioned the following other problems with which he is confronted at present:

(1) While the present ration allocated to him for his camps is much superior to what these people had been accustomed, it is nonetheless not sufficient to restore the health of people who have been suffering for some time from undernourishment. Kirkwood stated that the present ration was a low type British ration, which was sufficient to maintain health but not to restore health.

(2) He said that he had immediate need of six additional doctors and increased medical supplies and equipment. In this connection Kirkwood asked me whether I could arrange to have sent to Italy a hospital organization now in England

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and already organized for service. He said that he knew this organization was there and had been for some time. He pointed out that it was a unit run by the Quakers or other such organization which would not serve combatants but would serve refugees.

(3) Kirkwood pointed out that there was present need for increased counterintelligence for operational clearing of refugees and for maintaining security within the area, and that if the flow of refugees were expanded, a much larger increase in counterintelligence activities would be needed.

(4) Kirkwood stated that he hoped that his task could soon be shifted to a civilian organization.

(5) Kirkwood pointed out that insufficient transportation and personnel had been allocated to him for movement of people within and among the camps and that he had difficulty in keeping certain available personnel. He said that the authorities were apparently anxious to throw on him every new problem that arose, however distantly related to his work, but they did not seem to appreciate his added needs.

(6) He suggested that the people in refugee camps were anxious to do things to help themselves and others, but that he was not able to provide the assistance necessary for such work projects. He also pointed out the morale value of such camp activities. He said that one camp had in one week turned out 600 garments, and that the problem of clothing the refugees could be partially solved if cloth and needles and some machines could be made available.

(7) Kirkwood stated that under the agreement with MERRA, 25,000 people would be taken. He said that this quota had not been reached, but that the agreement expired at the end of April and that he was extremely anxious that this outlet for people from his camps not be closed.

Kirkwood, a man who had never been associated in such work, seemed to me to be trying to do a good job. His problem is clearly difficult and probably exasperating at times, but the problem has grown on him and he is clearly moved by the humanitarian aspect of it.

As Major General Nathan W. Twinning is the highest ranking American officer in the area (he is in charge of the 15th Air Force), I decided to call upon him. Twinning was pleasant and gracious but he had never read of nor heard of the War

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Refugee Board or any statements or directives in connection with it. He said he would like to do all he could but that he did not know anything about the problem, that his job was bombing objectives, and he did not want to get involved in any other problems. After some conversation, he called in his Chief Intelligence Officer, Col. John Young, and told him to put me in contact with all persons who Young thought would be of assistance.

Young emphasized the difficulty of the problem. I told Young that I knew this before I came and that that was therefore not news to me. Young said that there was nothing that he or his organization could do, and suggested that I see Lt. Commander Green of the Special Balkan Service, and Captain Stampedos of the same service. These references were of no help as these men belonged to OSS, and I had already arranged to see them.

I thereupon called to see Major Arnoldi of the Special Balkan Service, to which OSS personnel are attached. Arnoldi is of the OSS, a man who obviously knows Yugoslavia thoroughly and who actually operates behind the enemy lines in the area. Arnoldi is very interested in the project. Here again there was further evidence that information about the Board and its objectives had not been disseminated even among military personnel doing work closely related to the Board's activities. Arnoldi asked for copies of the various documents which I, of course, gave him. Among these documents were the cables relating to financial help for evacuation of refugees from the Island of Rab. He said that it was not important that he had not seen these cables as they were of no practical importance. When asked why, Arnoldi said that this was one aspect of the problem in which the Yugoslaves did not require financial aid; that these people were interested in using their available boats and themselves without remuneration; that this was one case where patriotic and financial motives were not confused.

I asked Arnoldi directly why nothing had been done to implement the War Refugee Board objectives in the Balkans. Arnoldi had the following to say:

(1) The shipping problem is the main problem. Although there are many ships tied up along the Italian Adriatic coast, these have not been made available to the partisans for such purposes. Of these ships many actually belong to the partisans but are in need of repairs, some minor. The Yugoslavs constantly ask for cooperation in this connection but received none.

What few Yugoslav ships have been repaired were repaired with materials bought by the Yugoslaves out of their own funds on the black market at exorbitant prices. Occasionally a Yugoslav ship is put on the repair docks but in each case the British authorities, who control all shipping and related matters, have removed the ships before completion because of alleged war priorities. No repair facilities whatsoever have been given to the partisans and practically no financial assistance either has been given to them.

(2) There are available plenty of partisans to man the ships, men who are willing to assume the risks without financial remuneration of any kind.

(3) Today German control of the coastal islands and of the coast is tighter than it has been for some time, but the situation is extremely fluid and preparation should go on at all times so that full advantage may be taken of any favorable change in the situation. However, even in the present tight situation, the partisans would be able to accomplish much if certain assistance and cooperation were given them.

(4) The Germans have now reoccupied Tab and certain other islands and increased their control over the coast.

(5) Most of the refugees have been removed from the coastal areas; many of these people reached the coastal islands from the coast and reached the coast from the interior of the country.

(6) Movement from the interior to the coast is very difficult and taxes human powers to the limit because of the lack of transportation and of food.

(7) In four months only 6,000 tons of supplies, including military equipment, have been made available to the partisans despite large and grand promises.

(8) The Allies appear to be more concerned about the political problem than any other. Tito's communistic form of government is always emphasized and reemphasized, as is the feared Russian dominance of the Balkan area.

(9) Previous efforts to increase aid to the partisans had met with opposition from headquarters.

(10) Always emphasized is the extreme difficulty of bringing further assistance in view of the tight shipping and supply situation. Reiterated is the statement that the authorities are doing all they can.

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Arnoldi stated that Special Naval Service uses fast boats to bring limited amounts of supplies to the partisans and to evacuate people where possible. It was Arnoldi's opinion that the partisans would and could open up a section of the coast if the effort were warranted and justified by the amount of supplies and equipment which the Allies would give.

People are still arriving in trickles to the Dalmation Islands as a large scale movement is at this moment very difficult. Arnoldi pointed out that many Yugoslavs and refugees are not anxious to leave the country but prefer to join the fighting partisans. Large sections of the country are under the control of the partisans which makes it possible for civilians to find relative safety within Yugoslavia. Thus, the main problem is getting food and supplies to these people. If the Allied Authorities would cooperate on shipping and supplies and some air cover, where necessary, the partisans would be glad to assume the responsibility for movement of supplies in and the movement out of those people who want to go. Thus, most of those now coming to the coastal islands or to Italy are children, old folks, pregnant women and the sick and injured. Arnoldi pointed out that many Yugoslav ships are still under the Italian flag and that partisans jailed by the Italians before the fall of Mussolini are still jailed.

In connection with bringing assistance to refugees in Hungary and Rumania, Arnoldi pointed out that only strong and able-bodied men will be able to stand the trip under the existing circumstances. Many Allied airmen are being brought out by the partisans. Increased efforts to open new channels of escape from Hungary and Rumania would require food and medical supplies and financial assistance for the establishment of relay stations. At present, supplies of food and medicine are hardly sufficient to provide for the needs of the Partisan Army. What remains is shared and shared alike by the Yugoslavian civilian population and the refugees. All refugees who were able to get out of Hungary and Rumania are protected and fed by the partisans. Arnoldi stated that this question would have to be discussed with Tito's representative and possibly even Tito. I asked Arnoldi whether, in his opinion, partisans would be willing, through their contact with resistance movements in Hungary and Rumania or Bulgaria, to organize the removal of people from dangerous to possibly safe areas, in case the German armies in retreat should undertake wholesale slaughter. Arnoldi stated that while he was sure that cooperation might be expected from the partisans, he would prefer that I discuss this specific problem with the partisans.

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Arnoldi thereupon called the head of the Refugee Committee of the Yugoslav National Committee at Bari, Dr. Gunjcka, and arranged for me to talk with him.

✓ The next discussion of value was had with Lt. Commander Green (U.S. Navy), who is apparently the head of the OSS delegation which is attached to the Special Balkan Service, under British control. (This organization controls all operational activities in the Balkans and functions through Brigadier MacLean, formerly a British diplomat made Brigadier and attached to Tito as Allied Representative). Green's views were not nearly so encouraging nor so helpful as those of Arnoldi and others to whom I subsequently talked in the OSS group attached to SBS. Green's general attitude more nearly approached that of the Allied Staff in Algiers; that is, this is a difficult and complex problem, and we are doing as much as present circumstances permit. Green, like certain other individuals to whom I talked, represents the completely negative approach to difficult problems. There were those who stated that this is a difficult and complicated problem, but whose minds then turned to the question of what can we do despite the difficulty, and how shall we do it. Then there were those who merely emphasized the difficulty and complexity of the problem. As a digression, it is interesting to note that those who were closest to the problem and clearly more thoroughly informed on it, fell into the first category.

At any rate, Green contradicted the views expressed by others to the effect that the shipping problem was not unsolvable. Green stated that, as I had said, there were numerous ships tied up along the Italian-Adriatic coast; but that these were in need of repair and that there was a great priority on repair facilities, repair materials and labor. They also stated that there was a great priority on existing available shipping, both in the Adriatic Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. I asked him what help we had given to the partisans in connection with shipping. He said (a) shipping is under British control and (b) all available help had already been given. I stated that on the basis of conversations with other persons, presumably well informed on the subject, that this amounted to exactly zero. He denied this and stated, with emphasis on secrecy of it, that his organization (presumably meaning OSS) had given \$25,000 to the Yugoslavs for the repair of ships. I inquired whether, in view of his earlier statements about the availability of facilities, repair materials and labor, he thought the \$25,000 could be put to any use.

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Green passed that one off with a shrug of his shoulders. I then asked him if the Yugoslavs had requested these funds. He replied that they had asked for \$70,000. I asked him whether he had any information that the \$25,000 allocated had been used by the partisans to repair a ship or ships, and he said he thought it had. Further questions along this line indicated that Green was an intelligence officer whose activities were apparently more closely connected with matters other than shipping.

I outlined the objectives of the Board and the practical solutions which I thought might be employed. He asked me whether I intended to move the entire population of Yugoslavia to Italy (which was not the first time that I heard that ironic question). I replied that such obviously was not my objective and that, as I saw the problem, I was equally if not more interested in removing all populations including refugees from occupied to unoccupied areas of Yugoslavia and from dangerous to safe areas of Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, as I was in evacuating people. Green inquired whether I was interested only in refugee Jews. I replied that such was not the case; that we were as interested in saving the lives of all people who were in danger of death at the hands of the Germans. Green thereupon inquired whether I might not, within five or six months, be interested in protecting the 100,000 Michaelovitch chetniks from the partisans. I passed that one.

Green then inquired whether I had investigated the facilities available for handling refugees in Italy. I replied that, subject to the provision of certain assistance, the existing facilities were probably adequate for the near future, but if large evacuations became possible, or if the 5,000 to 15,000 refugees in Northern Italy were rescued, we could consider enlarging the existing facilities. Green stated that, in his opinion, any expansion of evacuations would have to be attended by increased provision for security checks by counter-intelligence, which he considered to be inadequate at present in all respects.

I asked Green why we had not moved additional supplies to the coastal islands occupied by the Yugoslavs and to the coast itself, and he said there simply was not sufficient naval protection available. He pointed out that supplies had been taken to the Island of Viz, now occupied by 2,000 Slavs, 800 British and 200 Americans, but that these were mostly for the Partisan Army. Green again adverted to the additional tax on the refugee facilities in Southern Italy which will be imposed when refugees in unconquered Italy, consisting mostly of Jews and political refugees, have to be taken care of by us.

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Green then pointed out that it was impossible to get supplies into the interior of Yugoslavia except by plane and that the planes were simply not available, although from time to time a few were being used to bring military equipment and supplies to the partisans. He pointed out that several days before this conversation 27 B-26's had been sent over with equipment but had to return without dropping it due to weather conditions. He again emphasized that this was a secondary theater of operations and that therefore the primary theater of operations is continually drawing off equipment much needed in the Mediterranean theater. (This was part of the argument of Brig. General Caffey). Green concluded by declaring his sympathy with the objectives I was seeking and his regret at the fact that projects of this nature had not been undertaken a year earlier when this was a primary theater of operations and equipment and facilities could have been spared. Green offered to put me in touch with the partisan leaders.

Conversation with Ensign Vucinich of Special Balkan Service:

Ensign Vucinich is a representative of OSS, of American birth but of Serbian extraction, who had lived many years in Yugoslavia. (You will recall that Tito originated in Slovenia). Vucinich, like Arnoldi, also of OSS, had views largely dissimilar from those of Green who heads up their organization. Whereas Arnoldi and Vucinich admitted the difficulties involved, they were nonetheless anxious to make some effort and inclined to the belief that some favorable results might be achieved. Vucinich gave the key to the problem when he said that if cooperation had been given to the partisans a year ago, or at various times throughout the past year, the serious problem which exists today would have to some extent been avoided or alleviated. What Vucinich meant to indicate by this statement was that preparations made today may prove of considerable concrete value tomorrow, and that there is simply no logic in the position that nothing can be done and that the refugees, including Yugoslav nationals who for all purposes are also refugees, must try to live until the liberation of the country. Vucinich pointed out that there were many times during the course of the last year when whole sections of the coast were under control of the partisans, and that aid could have been brought and people evacuated with excellent chances of success. Vucinich pointed out that the extent to which the Yugoslav could and can aid the refugees and their own people is by getting supplies which enable them to feed their own army and still have enough to feed the refugees and civilian population. Thus, today

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what food and supplies remain after the army gets its subsistence is divided equally among Yugoslavs and refugees of all nationalities. It was the view of Vucinich that the political attitude towards Tito prevented the delivery of aid to him during the past, as it has also had the effect of limiting the offer to bring aid at this time to measurable prospects of military assistance from the Yugoslavs. This is another key to the problem. Despite all expressions of sympathy and regret, it seemed to me that the Allied Authorities are concerned, both in the matter of evacuation of refugees and in delivery of supplies, only as direct military contributions of the partisans are involved. Total deliveries of all types of supplies to the partisans in the last four months was 6,000 tons. The following recommendations arose out of these conversations with Arnoldi and Vucinich:

(1) Insulate, so far as possible, the political factor. Implement that principle by seeing to it that war refugee matters are handled by a representative of the War Refugee Board directly attached to Marshal Tito's headquarters in Yugoslavia; or, if the expected objections to such an arrangement can not be overcome, then place a representative at Bari. In other words, see to it that the war refugee problem is not handled by those who are concerned with political questions.

(2) Accept the Yugoslav challenge that if the facilities were put in their hands they could actually do something. In fact, this means working out in Washington with Admiral Leahy, the President or others, as appropriate, arrangements whereby some of the 65 Yugoslav Partisan ships may be repaired and made available to the partisans. See if it is not possible to effect release to the partisans of Yugoslav ships now under the control of the Yugoslav Government, or under the control of the Italians, if these ships are not being used for absolutely necessary military operations or purposes. In this connection, I may mention that we should not accept at face value the argument advanced by the military that nothing can be spared. For instance, why should not the Naval Officer in charge at Bari be required to substantiate his statement to this effect.

(3) Give the partisans the responsibility and the risk of life and the ships involved in such traffic. The partisans declared that they did not ask the Allies to accept either the responsibility or the risk. Obviously the partisans are willing to accept greater responsibility and to undertake larger risks because, as they say, they are Yugoslav partisans and it is Yugoslav partisans and others friendly to them and those who are enemies of the Nazis who have come to them for assistance, whom they want to save.

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(4) Make supplies directly available to the Yugoslav National Committee at Bari, or if the political consequences of this action are feared, then put the action on a humanitarian level and make the supplies directly available to the refugee committee of the Yugoslav National Committee. Thus, is it possible to lend-lease certain equipment and supplies for this purpose? If the Lend Lease Act offers certain technical obstacles, it might be pointed out that the use of such supplies is strongly related to the military situation.

(5) Try to obtain cooperation and assistance from UNRRA, if that is possible at this time.

Conversation with Dr. Gunjcka:

Dr. Gunjcka explained at the outset that he was interested in prospects of help from the United States. He stated that the Yugoslav Partisans had saved many thousands of refugees, and many thousands of their own people without any assistance from the outside. He indicated that in the mind of the Yugoslavs there was no difference between themselves and the refugees. He said that between 600,000 and 900,000 Yugoslavs had either been executed by the Nazis or died of starvation or illness as a result of the Nazi occupation. He stated that the partisans brought refuge to all enemies of Hitler who managed to escape to Yugoslav territory occupied by the partisans. He said that there are partisan committees organized and active in practically every Yugoslav city and village, including those occupied by the Germans, and that through the cooperation of these committees, many refugees had been brought to the safety of territory occupied by the partisans. I asked him how this organization functioned and whether it would be possible to enlarge it and what assistance we could give in this connection. He replied that due to the limitations of food, finances, personnel and transportation, they were reaching the limits on the number of people who can be brought to safe territory by the partisans. He pointed out that each local committee designates those who are to be brought out at any one time, priority generally being given to those such as able-bodied young men who could fight, and those who would be executed if captured, or imprisoned and/or deported. He said many Allied airmen had been brought out of Hungary and Rumania by this means across Yugoslavia and ultimately back to their stations in Italy. He then indicated that those selected were moved under protection and guidance of the partisans from town to town over specially selected routes, and that this was difficult today because of the lack of food and transportation and the limits of human endurance.

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As to the second question, Gunjcka stated that these channels could undoubtedly be expanded somewhat subject to assistance in supplies of food, medical equipment and transportation. I pointed out the extreme difficulty and improbability of our being able to deliver equipment into the far interior as that this could be done practically only by plane. Gunjcka stated that he knew this was true but that some help could be accomplished if only financial assistance could be given so that relay stations could be established along the routes and food bought from the countryside.

I asked Gunjcka what he thought could be done by the partisans to assist us in rescuing Hungarian and Rumanian refugees now within those countries, and whether he thought that the partisans would be prepared to employ their contacts with the resistance groups in those countries toward those ends. Gunjcka replied that mass evacuation was impossible; that some increase in the number of those afforded escape could probably be made but that the number of persons rescued in this manner would not be large due to the difficulties inherent in the method itself; and that undoubtedly the best and most practical objective in this situation was the use of the tactics which the Yugoslavs themselves employed in Yugoslavia, namely, organized removals of people in danger of death in one section of those countries to other sections. Gunjcka stated that he was not in position to give any assurances on behalf of the partisans that they could cooperate in such a project, as this was a matter which involved foreign relations and would have to be cleared with the head of the Yugoslav National Committee in Bari, and probably Tito himself. Gunjcka stated that he would arrange for me to talk with Col. Dedijer of the Yugoslav General Staff in Italy.

Dedijer is a very impressive person who has fought with the partisans in Yugoslavia for quite some time. He was more optimistic than any of the others to whom I talked about the prospects of achieving some results in this program. Dedijer asked me if I would submit a memorandum stating the questions to which I wanted answers. This I did, and the only copy of this document was forwarded to you through the intermediary of Hirschman. Dedijer told me he was leaving for Naples on the following morning and that he would reply to my memorandum within a few days. I told him that I was leaving for Algiers the following day and would appreciate it if I could have his reply before he left for Naples. Dedijer stated that he would prefer to cover the subject in careful and detailed fashion.

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I said I would rather have at once whatever he could get out and that I would also like to have a subsequent detailed memorandum. I received the following morning a memorandum which I sent you through Hirschman. This memorandum pretty nearly summarizes what Dedijer told me verbally. After this thing had been translated, I found that while it was interesting, it was too general and did not answer the specific questions which I had put to Dedijer. I thereupon deferred my return to Algiers and arranged to see Col. Popovich, who had signed the first memorandum in the absence of Dedijer.

I talked to Popovich and to Smodlaka, Assistant to the Foreign Minister, for some hours. Both were very realistic and emphasized the need for breaking the shipping bottleneck as a first measure. Their comment and attitude were quite rough on this question which served to convince me further that despite the comment of the Allied authorities, some cooperation can be given to the partisans. After lengthy discussion of this subject, I asked them to submit to me a further memorandum citing what ships were available, where they were, what was the extent of repairs needed, the matter of time and money, how many ships could be repaired, for instance, in one month given the facilities, what monthly outlay they thought would be required, whether they thought they could get the labor, etc.

Both men then emphasized that the extent to which they could render further assistance would depend on the amount of supplies which could be given to them by the Allies. They pointed out that this was fundamental as there was only a limited amount of food and medical equipment available, practically only sufficient for the Army, and that as they accepted more refugees, and tried to move more of their own people whom they also call refugees to several areas, they were confronted with the very difficult program of keeping the Army fed and in health. He said, off the record, that he did not understand why the British authorities refused to make supplies directly available to the partisans who were willing, given the shipping, to run the risks and accept the responsibility. He said that while the situation was difficult now, much help could have been brought in the past if the Allies had been disposed to help, and that the same attitude persisted with the result that instead of cooperating with the partisans to prepare now so that full advantage may be taken of future favorable opportunities, nothing was being done. It was emphasized that the military situation was very fluid, and that when opportunities developed, as they surely would, they would be in the same position then as they are now. Popovich stated the Allies were apparently only interested in getting minimum assistance to the partisan Army to try to keep it together until it could be used as a military force in case of an invasion (practically the same statement was made by General Caffey several days later in Algiers).

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Popovich inquired why the Americans did not take any interest in the Balkan area. I stated we were interested in saving those who were in danger of death from Hitler, and that included the Yugoslavs, wherever there was a case of fear of extermination or fear of death from starvation resulting from the ravages of the German armies. Further, Popovich then said that representatives of the Allies had made large promises in the past which have not been fulfilled and that he was anxious not to arouse undue enthusiasm in this case without some practical evidence that we were willing to do more than talk. I then told Popovich that if he would give us assurances that the partisans would continue their efforts toward helping the refugees outside and inside the country, that we would give aid, that it was immediately possible to give certain aid in the form of money and gold, if needed, to finance activities in the other Balkan countries. Popovich then asked when such money and gold could be made available. I stated that we needed to have specific requirements stated and that it was for this reason that a further memorandum should be prepared and submitted, and that in this memorandum he should state initial funds required for various purposes and projects. Popovich then asked how long it would be after I received such memorandum that this assistance would be forthcoming. I replied that only so long as was required to get the necessary information to Washington and to make the necessary arrangements. Popovich asked how long I estimated this would be. I said that I didn't know but that it would be done as quickly as possible. He smiled. Then I said two or three weeks. Popovich then asked what I thought the War Refugee Board could do about the shipping problem. I replied that I was not in a position to give any assurances on this subject except that the information I had collected would be transmitted to Washington and that the War Refugee Board would do all in its power consistent with the prosecution of the war to help them in the matter of ships.

I then pointed out to Popovich that Dedijer's memorandum in reply to my memorandum had neglected to answer my question about the cooperation which we might expect from the partisans in connection with the Rumanian and Hungarian problems. Popovich stated that there was ample evidence of partisan accomplishment in respect of refugees to prove that they were doing all that it was possible for them to do under the circumstances whether these refugees went into Yugoslavia from other countries, or were already within the country. He stated no refugee had been refused the aid and protection of the partisans unless he were a German spy. However, Popovich

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pointed out that the Yugoslavs were understandably interested in saving their own people first. I stated that this was understandable and that, as he must have noted in my memorandum, we took account of this, but that we were also interested in the problem of the other Balkan countries. He then repeated what the others had said about the problem, concluding with the statement that this question would have to be referred to Tito.

I asked Popovich when I might expect the additional memorandum and he said that it would take five or six days to complete it.

I talked with others in and out of the military whose comments have not been recorded in this memorandum, either because they did not have anything of real value to say, or because what they said had already been said by others who carried weight.

Copy of the cable which I had prepared for transmission to you, but which was not sent by cable, must now have reached you by the hand of Hirschman. Ackermann and Hoffman felt that it was too dangerous to transmit this cable through State Department channels. I think that this is one of those problems which must be attacked directly if any success is going to be achieved. Persuasion will have no good effect whatsoever. Knowledge on the part of the military that their bald and unsubstantiated statements are not accepted at face value by all persons associated with these problems may prove of value. Pressure from appropriate quarters in Washington will certainly produce the desired result if, and only if, local military czars realize that the mere statement that they cannot do anything beyond what they are now doing will not close the subject.

Upon my return to Algiers April 8th, Glasser, Ackermann and myself called upon General Caffey as it was felt that I should report to the AFHQ. Inasmuch as Caffey's strong position was already known, it was decided that we should in fact say very little, and only report the views of the Yugoslav partisans. I therefore mentioned to General Caffey at the opening of the meeting a few of the points which the partisans had made. Caffey did not permit me to finish. He grew very angry and stated: "These Yugoslavs are congenital liars!" He then went on to repeat what he had told us before my departure for Bari. He said that while nothing could be accomplished, no assistance could be expected from AFHQ, he would nonetheless be glad to discuss any specific projects with us. He said that a partisan General by the name of Velebit would be coming to Algiers within the next two or three weeks, and that he would be glad to arrange for us to see him. He said that this partisan, Velebit, was no more a communist than he (Caffey) or any of us, as this partisan

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was formerly one of the great industrialists of Yugoslavia. He then repeated his sympathy with our objectives. Mr. Glasser mentioned that we could be of some aid in the form of funds and gold, and Caffey had nothing to say on this.

Caffey remarked that if any plan providing for AFHQ assistance in any project of ours came across his desk, he would not approve it and that we might as well know that now. Moreover, he stated that he had already raised this question with General Maitland-Wilson and his staff at a Commander-in-Chief meeting, and that the General Staff had already expressed its agreement with his views.

Caffey then discussed the Tito military organization. He said, in effect, that Tito did not have an army, that they were of only slight nuisance value to the Nazis, that the Nazis could do anything they wished in Yugoslavia and take any piece of territory they wished to take. By this point Caffey undoubtedly wanted to make clear that the so-called Tito Army could be of no assistance. He pointed out finally that the Yugoslavs are fighting among themselves, meaning the Mihailovitch chetniks and the Tito partisans. He said that he had 40 British liaison officers attached to Tito and 22 such officers attached to Mihailovitch. Despite this statement of Caffey's, I was informed the following day that orders had actually been issued for the withdrawal of 22 British officers attached to Mihailovitch. I can not confirm this. Caffey declared that it was still possible to reach Tito's headquarters only by parachute, whereas I was informed by a good authority in Bari that a daily plane service to Tito's headquarters has recently been installed.


James J. Saxon

Algiers,
April 10, 1944.

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~~TOP SECRET~~

Algiers,
April 14, 1944.

MEMORANDUM TO MR. JOHN W. PEHLE, ACTING DIRECTOR, WAR
REFUGEE BOARD:

Harold Glasser and I have discussed the Balkan problem at some length. It is our conviction that really valuable work can probably be done in this area, but that there must be intensive work in preparation. It seems clear to us that whatever is done can be accomplished only through the cooperation, assistance and instrumentality of the Partisans. It is our view in developing projects that the Jews and other refugees, whether within or without the country, must not be distinguished from the Yugoslavs themselves who are in the same status as the refugees, and from the standpoint of getting and keeping the assistance of the Partisans, this principle must be continuously borne in mind.

We have already talked much to the Partisans on this subject. We must now offer concrete assistance without further delay, even if this immediate assistance is unrelated to the specific projects. I recommend that you remit funds up to \$100,000 to the Refugee Committee of the Yugoslav National Committee at Bari, and that you also request the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct General Devers to release gold coins to the value of \$50,000 for delivery to the Refugee Committee of the Yugoslav National Committee at Bari.

In the meantime, I shall continue to try to work out some solution to the shipping problem, although I am not sure that much could be accomplished by us on that score. For your part, I should appreciate it if you would discuss with Admiral Leahy and with the War Shipping Administration and others, as appropriate, the possibility of doing something on the shipping line. Charley Kalleck, Regional Director of the War Shipping Administration here, will extend all the cooperation it is within his power to give, but it must be remembered that neither he nor the War Shipping Administration control shipping.

Harold Glasser and I are of the opinion that food and other supplies should be made directly available to the Yugoslav National Committee at Bari under their own full authority. We have thought it might be possible to use lend lease for this purpose.

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I do not wish to be over enthusiastic about the prospects. I do, however, wish to state that some good could be accomplished and possibly even large results achieved. However, small or large, we shall accomplish nothing unless we take hold and try to do what we can immediately.



James J. Saxon.

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~~TOP SECRET~~

REPORT TO MR. JOHN W. PENNIE, ACTING DIRECTOR
WAR REFUGEE BOARD, OF A CONVERSATION WITH MAJOR
GENERAL VELEBIT, REPRESENTATIVE OF MARSHAL TITO
TO ALLIED FORCE HEADQUARTERS, AT ALGIERS 19
APRIL, 1944

In the last meeting with General Caffey he stated that General Velebit was expected shortly in Algiers, and that Caffey would contact us in order that we might discuss the problem in the Balkans.

I opened the conversation by outlining the interest of the Board in the Balkans. I stated that these matters had been discussed at length with representatives of the Yugoslav National Committee at Bari, and that a memorandum had been exchanged between them and myself, and finally that they had promised to transmit a further and more detailed memorandum which I had not yet received.

General Velebit stated that he was in Bari yesterday en route from Tito's headquarters to Algiers, and that while there he had read the memoranda exchanged and had discussed the problems with their Bari representatives.

General Velebit stated that we were interested in saving and evacuating only refugee Jews, which view was also held by many other persons with whom I had previously spoken. I pointed out that this was not the case, which my memorandum had made clear, and that we were interested in trying to save all people, irrespective of race and religion, who were in danger of death from the Germans. Velebit stated that in his experience many Jews preferred to go to concentration camps rather than to accept and endure the hardships and privations which befell those who had joined the Partisans.

I inquired whether the Partisans were willing and able to develop channels of escape out of Hungary and Rumania. Velebit stated that this was extremely difficult although it could be done. He said that such operations would require organizations in Rumania and Hungary which would be equipped to handle such projects from those ends. He said that the resistance movements in Hungary and Rumania were small and not organized to the high point required to assure the successful execution of such projects. I asked Velebit whether he did

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By R. H. Parks Date SEP 27 1972

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not think that the resistance movement in those two countries would not expand and grow as a result of the German occupation and the application of German tactics. Velebit replied that he considered this likely but that there was still the question of the time involved in the development of such organizations. In reply to my question whether the Partisans now had contacts with present resistance movements in Hungary and Rumania, Velebit stated that they did have such contacts but that they were few because of the size and organization of the movements in those countries, a matter which, as I have mentioned before, might be remedied as a result of the German occupation. He pointed out that there is now a Hungarian battalion fighting in Slovenia with the Partisans and that it would be possible to use these men to develop the necessary liaison. He said that if I would give him the names of persons to contact in Hungary and Rumania, he would put his people in contact with them directly. I stated that I was not in a position to do this because, as I had explained to the Tito people in Bari, we are for all practical purposes completely dependent upon the assistance of the Partisans in organizing and developing the necessary liaison.

Velebit then stated what would be involved if we decided to take out, for instance, 500 people from Rumania. The substance of this turned on the need for a highly developed organization which could be trusted safely and successfully to get 500 people to a designated spot at a designated hour, etc., at which point they could be picked up by the Partisans and guided through. He said that there was simply no such organization today in Hungary and Rumania, and that such an organization was essential if their own people and their routes were to be protected. If, as recently happened, one person, having been captured, turned informer, the Yugoslav Partisan guides would be tortured and killed, as they actually were, by the Germans. He said that these routes were precious secrets and must be protected. He pointed out that just today the British had asked him to arrange for the evacuation from Hungary of two British officers and that this would be done through the use of a member of the Hungarian battalion and a few Partisan contacts in Rumania. He pointed out, in addition, that 128 British and American airmen were safely conducted from enemy territory to Italy in the month of March through the assistance of the Yugoslav National Committee organized in the various occupied areas. He stated that there were 200 organizations of Partisans in the city of Zagreb alone.

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I asked him what assistance we could give in carrying out this project. He said that he would have to look into the stage of development of the resistance organization in Hungary and Rumania at this time, and to take up with Tito's headquarters the use of the Hungarians and Rumanians now fighting in Slovenia to carry out this project. He said that he would get in touch with me further on this point.

He then asked whether we could do anything to evacuate women and children from the Dalmatian Coast who were being annihilated and starved. He said that this is an extremely urgent problem and that, although the military situation is now very tight on the Dalmatian Coast, as the Germans had increased their forces in view of an anticipated Allied invasion, that they could nonetheless get the people out. He said that the situation was extremely critical because of the present tactics of the Germans, and that on April 16th the Germans had fallen on a certain town, the name of which I do not remember, and had killed 1,802 women, children and old men; had forced able-bodied males from 14 years of age and over into the German armed forces; and finally had marked the faces of the young women and forced them to comfort camps for the German officers and soldiers. I asked him what specific assistance we could give in this specific case. He said that they had to have ships and supplies and that the Allies had stated they were unable to make available further supplies at this time. I pointed out that it was exactly this kind of thing that I had asked Popovich to cover in a subsequent memorandum, outlining specific needs in ships, supplies and funds, etc.; that as soon as this memorandum was available we would make every effort to secure the necessary assistance. He said that he would investigate immediately what had happened to the promised memorandum.

Velebit stated that the Yugoslavs were not interested in large-scale evacuation. The reason for this is said to be that the Partisan Army was a popular army which required the support of as many of the people as possible. According to Velebit, the Army needed the people as they were almost an integral part of the Army in the matter of providing food, labor, and other forms of assistance. Moreover, it is Velebit's view, and that of Tito, as Velebit states, that they want to stay with the Army. Therefore, those whom they want to get out are the ones who, because of age, sex or health, can be of no assistance to the Army, and who are actually a heavy burden on them. These persons are the children, young

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women, especially those who are unmarried, the aged and the sick. The Yugoslavs are now anxious to remove as many of the young unmarried women as possible in order to protect them from the Nazis who press all of them into service for the physical satisfaction of the German officers and men.

I concluded the conversation by stating that we were anxious to do as much as could possibly be done in the way of finances, shipping, food and medical supplies, and that the speed with which we could aid them would depend upon the speed with which we received detailed information on specific projects. I stated that the information which had been given to me at Bari had already been transmitted to Washington, and that in my opinion authorization to bring financial help immediately would be forthcoming soon, but that delay might be encountered in some of the other problems as, for instance, shipping. Velebit stated that he would try to get the information to me as quickly as possible.

The most interesting statement made in the conference, so far as actual possibilities of evacuating people is concerned, was the simple unqualified statement that, despite increased German garrisons on the Dalmatian coast in anticipation of the invasion, the Partisans could evacuate the people. This statement is in sharp contradiction with the views of Caffey and others of AFHQ. It is also important to know in this connection that Velebit seems to be a well-educated, well-informed, contemplative person who would not ordinarily be given to rash statements.


James J. Saxon

Algiers,
19 April, 1944.

000835

~~TOP SECRET~~
Algiers,
April 20, 1944.

MEMORANDUM TO MR. JOHN W. PEHLE, ACTING DIRECTOR, WAR
REFUGEE BOARD:

I have just come from a talk with Charlie Kalleck, Regional Director of the War Shipping Administration. Kalleck has jurisdiction over Italian ports occupied by the Allies as well as North African.

I told Kalleck of my conversation with Major General Velebit and particularly of Velebit's request for a ship to move some people off the Dalmation Coast as urgently as possible. Kalleck asked some technical questions which I was not able to answer as, for instance, what ports were available on the Yugoslav Coast and other similar questions. I told Kalleck that I thought small boats of the schooner type would be suited. I asked him whether any such boats were available. Kalleck said there were, but that there were many demands for these boats and it was a question of priority. He said that it appeared to him that our claim would take priority over the Allied Control Commission claims for the movement from large Italian to the small Italian ports. I said that our claim was undoubtedly higher as in the case of evacuation, it was a matter of life or death.

Kalleck said that there were more than 200 small type Italian schooners tied up on the Adriatic Coast which were for the most part in working order. I asked why these had not been requisitioned. He said that the Italian Government had requisitioned the ships but that it was a question of getting physical hold of the ships themselves as the shipowners kept moving them in and out of the indentations in the coast in order to evade requisition. Kalleck said the Italian schooner owners found their boats more profitable when used for black market movement of goods and food. Kalleck said they were getting hold of these boats as fast as possible. Kalleck mentioned that it was possible that he might be able to get hold of an Italian boat that could accommodate 800 or 900 people, but it was a question of what type of boat could be used for the specific mission involved and how many people were involved, and whether all of those persons who were to be evacuated could be congregated in one spot. Kalleck said

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

000836

that the British had advised him earlier that this particular Italian ship was not in good repair, but Kalleck said that according to his information the ship was O.K. I told Kalleck that I would appreciate it if he would go with me to discuss the possible evacuation from the Dalmatian coast with Velebit who would undoubtedly be able to line up the project on the technical level. He said he would be glad to see him at any time and I am now trying to arrange for Kalleck and myself to see Velebit tomorrow.

All of this information from Kalleck seems to confirm the information I obtained at Bari to the effect that the shipping situation was not actually as tight as those in certain high military quarters for one reason or another claimed. This also confirms the statement made in my report on the Bari problem that it is going to be possible to accomplish something there with work, effort and cooperation.

Kalleck is extremely cooperative on all levels. He did, however, ask me whether I thought he ought to get clearance from War Shipping Administration in Washington before going ahead on these urgent projects. I told him that in my opinion he need have no fear on this score as I had seen in your reports record of assurances of cooperation given by Admiral Land to the Board. It might be well for you to contact Land further with a view to having him issue broad discretionary authority to his field representatives in connection with our work.

Kalleck also mentioned that he thinks he has been able to find a ship to give to the Turks in place of the one that we were going to make available for the Rumanian run. Charlie Kalleck asked me for the facts on this project but I did not happen to know them as Ackermann has been handling the problem. I called Ackermann in Casablanca, where he is investigating the Fedhala Camp, but neither he nor Beckelman apparently had any information. Ackerman will be back tomorrow but in this connection I wish to mention that it seems that Hirschman ran off without leaving adequate information here for us to deal with those aspects of this problem which may finally be settled here. Obviously some better coordination must be worked out between Cairo, Algiers, Bari and Casablanca and other places if this thing is to work smoothly. Perhaps it might be advisable to establish Cairo as Ackermann's headquarters and let him work out of there.


James J. Saxon

000837

G

000838

484 L.L. L.L.
3/3

March 6, 1945

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for you from Harold Trobe was received through the American Embassy in Lisbon under date of March 3, 1945:

"Resnik advises 102 non-Yugoslavs arrived Bari from Topusko February 24."

Very truly yours,

Florence Hodel
Assistant Executive Director

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

RBH ✓

RBHutchison: 3/6/45

000839

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

RECEIVED
DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES

MH-1995

1945 MAR 5 AM 9 55

PLAIN
Lisbon

marked Bari
Ch. O'Sullivan

DC/L
LIAISON

Dated March 3, 1945

Rec'd 7:37 a.m., 4th

Secretary of State,

Washington.

484, Third.

WRB 350 JDC 193 for LEAVITT FROM HAROLD TROBE

Resnik advises 102 non-Yugoslavs arrived Bari
from Topusko February 24.

CROCKER

RR

000840

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM
RECEIVED
DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

MOK-934

This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
Agency. (~~RESTRICTED~~)

Caserta

1945 MAR 2 AM 10 24

Dated March 1, 1945

DC/L Rec'd 3:10 p.m.

LIAISON

Secretary of State

Washington

769, March 1, 10 p.m.

FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

Re my 436 February 5, noon.

101 foreign refugees formerly at Topusko arrived
at Bari yesterday where they are now being screened by
British before being turned over to intergovernmental
refugee authorities in Italy. A few who were not
evacuated from Yugoslavia were obliged to remain there
due to illness, pregnancies, et cetera and are in the
Split area where they are receiving proper attention.

KIRK

WTD

CONTROL COPY

000841

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
CENTRAL SERVICES
TELEGRAPH SECTION

CONTROL COPY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF

Handwritten signatures and initials

1945 FEB 6 AM 9 31
Caserta

RS-1159
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (██████████)

DATE: February 5, 1945
RECORDS
(RECORD) 8:29 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

436, February 5, Noon
X
FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD

For security reasons the
text of this message should
be closely kept.

Randolph Churchill, who left Topusko several days ago, said this morning that there are 107 foreign Jewish refugees at Topusko who should be evacuated as soon as possible (reference my 1847 of December 20, midnight) and over 1000 Yugoslavian Jews who should remain in the country. He said that the group of 107 are fairly well off and positively in no danger of any kind, but added that the group of Yugoslav Jews were living under difficult conditions. He stated that due to severe winter conditions it would not be possible to remove the 107 forevacuation at this time. He confirmed that the group of 107 are well clothed and shod and are getting enough to eat.

KIRK

JT

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

000842

1
1945 - W...

December 28, 1944

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

The following message for Robert Pilpel from member
Lechnik was reported through the American Delegate in Rome
under date of December 21, 1944:

"J. Through special Weitzel committee, Paris,
which is financed adequately at present, Yugoslav
food packages, supplies and relief are reaching
Topuska group. There is a community kitchen at
Topuska. Group's evacuation because of military
considerations has been delayed. We are at present
endeavoring to arrange for their evacuation.

"Topuska group, for your information, includes more
than 1200 and of these about 600 are Yugoslavs, 100
children, and Yugoslav nationals with non-military
status number 400. Joint financed all available relief
supplied.

"Tomorrow departing for south and these and other matters
will be pursued.

"Similar auspices, group of 140 in Split also being aided."

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

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

✓
RDL

RDrury 12/28/44

000843

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

JMM-204

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

1944 DEC 22 Rome
PM 4 40

Dated December 21, 1944

Rec'd 5:10 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

1015, December 21, 2 p.m.

FOR ROBERT PILPEL FROM REUBEN RESNIK 9.

Yugoslav food parcels supplies and relief reaching
group in Topuska through special Gottlieb committee
Bari which presently adequately financed. Topuska has
community kitchen. Evacuation of group previously de-
layed by military considerations. We are now trying
arrange evacuation group.

For your information group Topuska includes over
1200 of whom about 600 Yugoslavs, 100 children and 400
Yugoslav nationals of non-military status. All accessible
relief supplied by joint financing.

Leaving for south tomorrow pursue these and other
matters.

Group of 140 in Split also receiving assistance
similar auspices.

Sent Lisbon, repeated to Department as No. 1015.

KIRK

WMB

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

For security reasons the
text of this message must
be closed to all persons
other than those named
herein.
CONTROL COPY
Message sent 12/28/44

000844

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

War Ref Bd
Pike

ALH-1977
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement.
██████████ W)

Caserta

Dated December 20, 1944

Rec'd 9:18 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

1847, December 20, midnight

FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Ref. Department's 424 November 25.

Colonel Huntington who has just returned from

Slovenia and Croatia reports that there are about
1000 Jews at Glina of which some 200 are not Yugoslav.
At present the air strip is unusable but it is plan-
ned to evacuate them over land. 5 who were especially
asked for are already on the way out. These refugees
are in no danger and are better supplied than the
populace at large, which has resulted in a certain
amount of ill will against them.

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

COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS
(LIAISON)

1944 DEC 21 PM 2 11

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF

KIRK

WMB

CONTROL COPY

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

000845

GABLE TO AMPOLAD, CASERTA, FOR KIRK FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Please accept Board's thanks for information forwarded your 1388
November 18 midnight and for your offer to pursue matter vigorously.
We will appreciate further periodic advice from you on progress made
either in evacuations or in supplying relief to these people.

11:00 a.m.

November 25, 1944

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

Jes
J. E. Ackerman
Lackermann:hd 11/23/44 *mtv*

000847

ATTACHED TO
AS ATTACHED TO
ATTACHED TO
ATTACHED TO
ATTACHED TO

DRAFT CABLE

To: AMPOLAD,
CASERTA

FOR KIRK FROM WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Please accept Board's thanks for information forwarded
your 1388 November 18 midnight and for your offer to pursue matter
vigorously. We will appreciate ^{Further} periodic advice from you on progress
made either in evacuations or in supplying relief to these people.

[Handwritten signature]

Code ~~Secret~~ W

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

000848

NOV 25 1944

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

In connection with your program to assist certain refugees in Yugoslavia, I am pleased to advise you that the Board has just been informed that a new air strip has been completed near the present location of this group of persons. It is planned to move the refugees near the site of this new field and then to evacuate them as soon as possible. In the meantime, we are advised that these people are in no immediate danger and will continue to receive supplies.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. M. A. Leavitt,
American Jewish Joint
Distribution Committee,
270 Madison Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

*Information referred to above received
by Board in cable # 1463 of Nov. 22,
from Caserta.*

FH:hd 11/25/44

24 ✓

000849

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

*War Ref Bd
J.M.P.H.*

FMH-1639
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (██████████ W)

Caserta

Dated November 22, 1944

Rec'd 10:05 p.m.

yugo

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1463, November 22, midnight

FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD

Reference my 1388 November 18, midnight.

OSS has informed me that a new air strip has just
been completed near present location of this group
and it is planned to move them near the sight of this
new field—and then evacuate them as soon as possible.
In the meantime they are in no immediate danger and
will continue to be supplied.

KIRK

JMS

CONTROL COPY

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-78
By R. H. Parks Date **SEP 27 1972**

000850

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

JMM-664
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (██████████ W)

Caserta
Dated November 18, 1944

Rec'd 2:57 a.m. 19th

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

Secretary of State
Washington

1388, November 18, midnight.

FOR WAR REFUGEE BOARD. Your 381, No. 14, 9 p.m.

The group under reference are in part as a controlled territory and are not (repeat not) on possible line of retreat of Germans.

Balkan air force has made and is making special efforts to keep them supplied with food and clothing. Evacuation is extremely difficult due to reduced number of flights caused by winter weather and priority given to sick and wounded. Some progress is being made however to evacuate small numbers. Our military authorities assure me they are in no danger from Germans.

I have informed Bari and will pursue this matter vigorously in order to alleviate situation of these unfortunate people as much as possible.

KIRK

WSB

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

CONTROL COPY

000851

DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE

REB

arrangement.

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

November 14, 1944

9 p.m.

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

FORWARDED PM 2 38

AMFOLAD

CONTROL COPY

CASERTA

381

The following for Kirk is from War Refugee Board.

Prior to Ackermann's departure he had discussion with
Offie regarding Jews in Croatia whose evacuation by plane
had been arranged. After 29 persons had been evacuated,
movement was delayed for several reasons. Please furnish
information as to possibility of completing evacuation
promptly. Kindly acquaint Major Klugman of British Military
Mission and Merrill in Bari with situation. Refugees are now
located at Topusko near Karlovac. Please advise whether it
is now considered by military that this area is on possible
line of retreat of Germans. If at all feasible we consider
it important that evacuations be completed.

CONFIDENTIAL
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text of this message must
be closely guarded.

SPETTINIUS
(ACTING)
(Gen.)

WRE:MMV:KG
11/11/44

BE

RECEIVED
REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON D.C.

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

000852

CABLE TO AMBASSADOR KIRK, ANPOLAD, CASERTA, ITALY.

Prior to Ackermann's departure he had discussion with Offie regarding Jews in Croatia whose evacuation by plane had been arranged. After 29 persons had been evacuated, movement was delayed for several reasons. Please furnish information as to possibility of completing evacuation promptly. Major Klugman of British Military Mission and Merrill in Bari should be acquainted with situation. Refugees are now located at Topusko near Karlovac. Please advise whether it is now considered by military that this area is on possible line of retreat of Germans. If at all feasible we consider it important that evacuations be completed.

~~THIS IS WND CABLE TO CASERTA NO.~~

4:45 p.m.
November 10, 1944

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

887
Ackermann:lab 11/10/44
gca

000853