

HISTORY OF THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD WITH SELECTED DOCUMENTS,
Volume II, Pages 695-816

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HISTORY OF THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD WITH SELECTED DOCUMENTS

VOLUME II

DOCUMENTS

PAGES 695-816

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DOCUMENT

143

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, Madrid
DATED: August 21, 1944
NUMBER: 2324

Refer Department's 2126 of July 28, paragraph marked 3.

The authorization given to consular officers in Spain and Portugal by the Department's 1008 of April 12 is hereby amended to include authorization to issue such visas to refugee children arriving in Switzerland [sic] from Hungary. For issuance through October, the additional non-preference quota immigration numbers given below were allotted to Madrid: Hungarian 27 to 71 inclusive.

Please advise appropriate Spanish and Portuguese officials and make all appropriate efforts to arrange for release to Spain and Portugal from Hungary of children who may be eligible for the issuance of such visas.

HULL

*Spain and Portugal

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DOCUMENT

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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Madrid, Spain, August 14, 1944.

No. 2905

Subject: Transmitting copies of Embassy's Notes
Verbales to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
requesting facilities for transit through
Spain of Jewish refugees proceeding from
Hungary.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

1/ I have the honor to enclose copies of the Embassy's Notes Verbales
2/ No. 2907 and No. 2908 of August 11, 1944, which have been addressed to
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in accordance with instructions con-
tained in the Department's telegrams no. 2126 of July 28, 1944, 10 p.m.
and no. 2194 of August 7, 6 p.m. requesting respectively that the
Spanish Government permit the entry into Spain of persons released
from Hungary in pursuance of the recent decision of the Hungarian
authorities to allow the departure from that country of Jewish persons
in possession of entry permits entitling them to admission to any other
country, and that, in particular, it permit the entry, in transit to
further destinations outside of Spain, of such persons to whom American
immigration visas were issued on or after July 1, 1941 but who, by
reason of transportation difficulties and the advent of war, have not
been able to make effective use of such visas.

The British Embassy in Madrid has not as yet received parallel
instructions and has consequently been unable to concert with this
Embassy in joint representations on this subject.

Respectfully yours,

Enclosures:

- 1/ Note Verbale No. 2907,
August 11, 1944.
- 2/ Note Verbale No. 2908,
August 11, 1944.

(Signed)
W.W. BUTTERWORTH

W. Walton Butterworth
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim

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[Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 2905,
August 14, 1944 from Spain.]

No. 2907

NOTE VERBALE

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has the honor to inform the latter that the United States Government has been informed, through official neutral channels, that the Hungarian Government has authorized the departure from Hungary of all Jewish persons in possession of entry permits entitling them to admission into any other country, including Palestine, and that the German Government is disposed to permit the transit of such persons through territories under its control.

In order that full advantage may be taken of this decision on the part of the Hungarian Government and that no possible avenue of escape may be denied to these unfortunate persons, the Embassy has been instructed by its Government, pursuant to the latter's urgent interest in the rescue of oppressed and persecuted minorities from German-controlled areas of Europe, to express the hope that the Spanish Government will convey to the appropriate Hungarian authorities at the earliest possible moment an expression of its willingness to receive on Spanish territory Jewish refugees proceeding from Hungary, at the same time instructing its representatives in Budapest accordingly, it being understood that every effort will be made by the United States Government, in cooperation with the British Government, to arrange the prompt onward transportation of such persons from Spain to havens of refuge in United Nations territory and to contribute to their maintenance and support in whatever manner the Spanish Government may deem desirable during the period of their stay on Spanish soil.

The United States Government has taken grateful cognizance of the steps which the Spanish Government has already taken toward the rescue of Jewish refugees from Hungary and other German-controlled areas of Europe, and is confident that, motivated by the same high principles of humanity, that Government will continue to devote to this humanitarian task its active support and willing cooperation.

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[Enclosure No. 2 to despatch No. 2905,
August 14, 1944, from Spain.]

No. 2908

NOTE VERBALE

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, with reference to its immediately preceding Note Verbale No. 2907 of this date requesting the cooperation of the Spanish Government in facilitating the entry into Spain, in transit to further destinations, of Jewish refugees released from Hungary pursuant to the decision of the appropriate Hungarian authorities to permit the departure from that country of all Jewish persons in possession of entry permits entitling them to admission into any other country, has the honor to inform the Ministry that there are known to be among these refugees a considerable number of persons to whom United States immigration visas were issued on or after July 1, 1941, the date upon which existing visa procedures took effect, but who, by reason of transportation difficulties and the advent of war, have been unable to make effective use of such visas.

In the belief that the lives of many of these persons might be saved by reason of the issuance of newly-validated visas, consular officers of the United States in Spain and other neutral countries have been authorized, subject to certain specified conditions, to issue to such persons upon personal application visas valid for immigration into the United States, and, in order that the latter may not be denied this opportunity of saving themselves from threatened persecution and possible death at the hands of Nazi authorities, the Embassy would request, on instructions from its Government, that the Spanish Government consent to permit the entry into Spain without reference to customary visa requirements, of all such persons to whom United States immigration visas were issued on or after the date in question, and that it make known this consent to the appropriate German, Hungarian and other German-satellite authorities.

On its part, the Embassy can give to the Ministry the assurances of its Government that any such persons so admitted into Spain will be adequately maintained while on Spanish soil and evacuated with the least possible delay, and that any who may be found not to be qualified for admission into the United States will be removed from Spain as promptly as possible to other destinations to be arranged by the United States Government.

Madrid, August 11, 1944.

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DOCUMENT

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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Madrid, Spain, September 26, 1944.

No. 3139

Subject: Transmitting Copy and Translation of Note Verbale from
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Concerning Entry into Spain
of Jewish Refugees Proceeding from Hungary.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

With reference to Embassy's despatch No. 2905 of August 14, 1944 transmitting to the Department copies of its Notes Verbales No. 2907 and No. 2908 of August 11, 1944 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting respectively that the Spanish Government permit the entry into Spain of persons released from Hungary in pursuance of the recent decision of the Hungarian authorities to allow the departure from that country of Jewish persons in possession of entry permits entitling them to admission to any other country, and that, in particular, it permit the entry, in transit to further destinations outside of Spain, of such persons to whom American immigration visas were issued on or after July 1, 1941 but who, by reason of transportation difficulties and the advent of war, have not been able to make effective use of such visas, I have the honor to enclose a copy and translation of the Ministry's Note Verbale No. 689 of September 16, 1944 in reply, in which it is stated that the Spanish Minister in Budapest has been instructed to grant transit visas to such persons and to intercede with the Hungarian and German authorities with a view towards facilitating their departure from Hungary. An official of the Ministry has stated that, although the latter realizes the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of these persons' actually proceeding to Spain, it is aware that the issuance of these visas to them may serve as a means of protection and is willing to authorize the issuance of such visas on that basis.

Although, as it will be noted, the Ministry's note Verbale makes specific reference only to the Embassy's note Verbale No. 2908, the above-mentioned official has informed the Embassy that it was in fact intended also to refer, and to be in reply, to the immediately preceding note Verbale No. 2907.

Enclosure:
Copy and translation of
Foreign Office's note
Verbale No. 689, September
16, 1944

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
CARLTON J. H. HAYES

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Enclosure to despatch No. 3139,
September 26, 1944, from Madrid.

TRANSLATION

(SEAL)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
B-1.- 15- E 2
Cite this reference in reply
No. 689

NOTE VERBALE

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents its compliments to the United States of America and with reference to its recent Note No. 2908 of August 11 in which it requests the cooperation of the Spanish Government in facilitating the entry into Spain in transit for other countries of Jewish refugees proceeding from Hungary, has the honor to advise that the suitable orders have been issued the Minister of Spain in that country in order that he proceed to grant transit visas for all those passports held by the referred-to Jews which may be presented for the purposes named. Moreover, instructions have likewise been given that he approach the Hungarian Government and the German occupation authorities with all interest towards facilitating the departure from Hungary of the cited persons.

Therefore, this Ministry considers that in this way the Spanish Government exhausts all possible steps which it can take in order to arrive at a favorable solution of the mentioned problem in which it has demonstrated it is placing its greatest interest and will.

Madrid, September 16, 1944.

To the Embassy of the United States of America.

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DOCUMENT

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

August 24, 1944
11 p.m.

Amembassy
Lisbon
2331

The following WRB cable No. 81 is for Dexter from Pehle.

In view of recent military developments in France the War Refugee Board feels that no further efforts should be made to rescue either children or adults from France through Spain. This matter has been discussed with Dr. Nahum Goldman who agreed and it is understood that the JDC is cabling its Lisbon office along the lines of the Board's decision. You should advise those persons and organizations in Portugal interested in rescue operations of this decision of the Board and ask them to advise their associates in Spain. In the event that any of such persons or organizations are planning to continue such rescue work from France through Spain you should promptly advise me by cable.

Since the above-mentioned rescue operations are ended insofar as the Board is concerned, I would appreciate your views concerning what, if any, worthwhile projects consistent with the Executive Order creating the Board remain to be carried out in or from Portugal.

With reference your WRB 154 (Embassy's No. 2509). Mann is going to England shortly where he will study problem and submit recommendations to the Board for its consideration regarding any action which it should take.

(GLW)

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DOCUMENT

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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Madrid, Spain, January 8, 1945.

No. 3819

Subject: Transmitting Report on Evacuation of Stateless
Refugees from Spain to North Africa.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

1/ I have the honor to enclose, as of possible interest to the
Department, a copy of a report on the evacuation of stateless refugees
from Spain to North Africa which has been prepared by Mr. David
Blickenstaff, director of the Representation in Spain of American
Relief Organizations, for Mr. Ned Campbell, representative in North
Africa of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration,
as a basis of discussion of plans for the possible evacuation of ad-
ditional numbers of such refugees to Philipeville and other UNRRA
camps in the Mediterranean area.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
CARLTON J.H. HAYES

Carlton J.H. Hayes

Enclosure:

Report, as stated

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Enclosure to despatch No. 3819,
January 8, 1945, from Madrid.

Report to Ned Campbell, UNRRA, North Africa, from David Blickenstaff,
Madrid

EVACUATION OF STATELESS REFUGEES TO NORTH AFRICA

History

After it had been decided in the Spring of 1943 to evacuate stateless and other unprotected refugees from Spain to the camp at Fedhala in North Africa, an arrangement was made dividing the responsibility of this operation between the British and American Governments through their embassies in Madrid. The American Government was to assemble and transport the refugees in Spain to the port of embarkation, and the British Government was to provide transportation by sea to North Africa.

In a meeting held on January 31, 1944, between representatives of the British and American Embassies, the French Diplomatic Mission, Mr. Beckelman (representing the UNRRA), and myself, it was decided that this office handle the applications made by refugees for admission to the camp, distribute these applications to the screening authorities, advise the refugees concerning the acceptance or rejection of their applications and negotiate with the Spanish authorities the release of the refugees from camp and their exit from Spain. The American Ambassador asked this office to also carry out for the American Embassy its functions of assembling and transporting to the port of embarkation the refugees accepted for entry into the camp.

In this way, three groups of refugees left for the North African Refugee Center:

May 4 -	36 refugees
June 21-	573 refugees
July 1 -	21 refugees
Total	630 refugees

Need of Outlet to North Africa

In my opinion an outlet to North Africa for stateless and other unprotected refugees is still urgently necessary though the numbers of refugees to whom such an opportunity is attractive has been greatly reduced by the three convoys to Fedhala and by expeditions to Palestine and Canada organized by this office during 1944. There nevertheless remain in Spain roughly one thousand refugees who receive financial assistance from American relief organizations. These are almost

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entirely refugees who are either legally or practically stateless. For some of them solutions will perhaps be found when return to France and other parts of liberated Europe become possible. For others, however, return to pre-1939 places of residence is impossible and they will become a part of the "hard core" of the post-war stateless refugee problem. I assume that the UNRRA or the Intergovernmental Committee is working on some solution to this more or less permanent problem and will make representations in this direction to the United Nations Governments when the plans for the post-war world are being drawn. It seems logical therefore that this group of refugees now in Spain should come as soon as possible under the authority and control of some such organization as the UNRRA.

There are, furthermore, many cases where the transfer to an UNRRA camp is, for humanitarian reasons, urgently desirable. In this category are many stateless and unprotected foreigners some of them resident for many years in Spain who, because of their participation on the Republican side during the Spanish civil war, are personae non grata with the present Spanish Government. Life for such persons in Spain is extremely difficult because of the impossibility to ^[sic] obtaining legal employment. Many of them are detained in work camps and prisons release from which being authorized only when immediate departure from Spain can be assured. The conditions of such internment leave much to be desired and the future for such refugees must appear completely hopeless.

Number of Refugees to be Evacuated.

Of the one thousand refugees remaining in Spain on the rolls of private American relief organizations it would be difficult to estimate the number that could be evacuated to an UNRRA camp. The following factors must be taken into consideration in making any estimate:

1.- Refugees look upon evacuation to a camp as only a last alternative, something to be avoided if possible. The number of those willing to accept evacuation to a camp increases or decreases as the events of the war cause hopes of return to liberated Europe to rise and fall in the minds of the refugees. The policies that will be followed by the national authorities, especially French and Belgian, will of course determine to a large extent how many refugees will look to an UNRRA camp as a solution to their problem. The French authorities in Madrid have recently been accepting applications for French visas. This has raised the hopes of some refugees that they will soon be able to return to France where many of them had been living for some years before the beginning of the war in 1939.

2.- The number of refugees who will apply for entry into an UNRRA camp is affected by the policy of the private relief organizations

now supporting them in Spain. Increasing needs elsewhere may cause these organizations to try to decrease their obligations in Spain. This will force some refugees to accept evacuation to a camp and will encourage others to do so by shaking the sense of security that they have developed during their stay in Spain with all expenses paid. If financial assistance were at present completely withdrawn, almost all the refugees now being assisted would be obliged to apply for evacuation to a camp. Till now none of the committees represented by this office has intimated that economic pressure should be used to oblige refugees to make such a decision.

3.- Experience has shown that a rather high percentage of applications for admission to the camp in North Africa are rejected. The North African screening authorities have dealt with our application lists as follows:

List No.	Date	No. of applicants	Number accepted	Number rejected	Percentage of rejections
1	Feb. 28	485	368	117	24%
2	Mar. 20	475	410	65	14%
3	Mar. 31	46	25	21	46%
4	Apr. 19	20	17	3	15%
5	May 2	47	19	28	60%
6	May 15	41	18	23	56%
7	June 16	93	60	33	35%
8	July 15	60	34	26	43%
9	July 25	4	4	-	-
10	Aug. 22	44	20	24	55%
11	Oct. 5	25	2	23	92%
Totals:		1,340	977	363	
12	Nov. 2	10	Report from screening authorities not yet received. 57 applications pending.		
13	Nov. 4	20			
14	Nov. 15	13			
15	Nov. 22	6			
16	Nov. 16	8			
Total:		1,397			

Thus, out of a total of 1,340 applicants, 977 or 73% were accepted.

(Note: Discounting lists 1 and 2 of Feb. 28 and March 30, which represent the applications screened for the three convoys that have so far left for North Africa, the percentage of rejections on applications screened after the three departures comes to 45%.)

Furthermore, during the preparation of the three convoys sent to Fedhala, there were many refugees who withdrew after their applications had been accepted. These three convoys, totalling 630 refugees, represented 960 applications of which 778 accepted. The 182 refugees who did

not leave though their applications were accepted, withdrew from the convoy for the following reasons:

Release from camp or prison or exit visa refused
by Spanish authorities 24%

Emigrated to other countries, or evacuated by
their diplomatic mission 23%

Remained in Spain with family member unable to
leave for North Africa for health reasons or
lack of exit permit 16%

Health and miscellaneous 22%

Applications withdrawn - no explanation given . . . 15%

At the present time the situation of applications, acceptances and rejections stands as follows:

- 1.- Number of refugees now in Spain whose applications are accepted 322
- 2.- Number of refugees now in Spain whose applications are rejected 311
- 3.- Number of refugees now in Spain whose applications are pending with the N.A. screening authorities 57
- 4.- Estimated number of accepted applicants who would be immediately ready to leave for N.A. 150

The Practical Problem

In order that these 150 refugees, and succeeding groups of refugees, be evacuated to North Africa, it is necessary that some competent authority (the UNHRA) undertake to obtain two things:

- 1.- That instructions be sent to the French authorities in Madrid for accepted applicants to be given documents that will permit them to disembark in North Africa.
- 2.- That permission be obtained from the competent military authorities to accept small groups (3 - 5 persons) of accepted, properly documented refugees on occasional ships leaving Gibraltar for North African ports; or that a ship be sent to some Spanish port especially to embark this first group of 150, and thereafter whenever a group of, say, fifty accepted applicants can be assembled.

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We are prepared in this office to handle for the UNRRA the mechanics of preparing the refugees for evacuation, obtaining the necessary permits from the Spanish Government and arranging for transportation to the port of embarkation.

With regard to No. 2 above, I would very much prefer the first suggestion. It is much more useful to have the possibility of evacuating, say, ten refugees every two or three weeks, than fifty refugees every three or four months. A great deal could be done for many refugees if we could intervene at the Spanish police on their behalf with the possibility of giving assurance of immediate evacuation.

There has been, in recent weeks, an increasing tendency on the part of the Spanish authorities to intern foreigners who are thought to be dangerous or unfriendly to the present regime and to maintain in concentration camps refugees who should ordinarily have been released upon our assumption of financial responsibility for them.

For these refugees especially evacuation to an UNRRA camp is urgently desirable, for two reasons:

1.- Internment in Spain is, at best, under conditions that are substandard, and in company with interned Spanish criminals and Nazi Gestapo and military personnel.

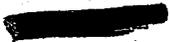
2.- No progress toward finding an eventual solution to the cases of these internees can be made while they are in Spanish camps and prisons. Contrary to what their situation would be in an UNRRA camp, they are not, in Spain, the subjects of efforts on the part of the interning authorities, to find a solution to the "displaced persons problem". Internment in Spain is "time lost" - under conditions of moral and physical suffering.

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Lisbon
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 6, 1944
NUMBER: 1367


Due to the fact that their maintenance here and their ultimate transportation to Palestine, the United States or some other destination are guaranteed by the Embassy, today the Portuguese Foreign Office agreed to accept three hundred children at a time without passports. By mail the details are being sent. For the present the number seems adequate. From the War Refugee Board funds here I have agreed to pay a part of the costs of the Jewish Congress reception center. Except that nothing should be said concerning the clandestine nature of the childrens' coming or from whence they come, there is no reason why this generous act of Portugal should not be given publicity. Others will be coming soon but at present there are only twelve here all of whom are Jewish Congress children.

Upon Spain the ultimate efforts of success now depend.

NORWEB

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Lisbon
DATED: May 8, 1944
NUMBER: 1289

Reference your Nos. 11, 12 and 15 of May 1 (Embassy's 1307, 1308 and 1317).

It appears that all of the foregoing cables may have been sent by you before you received our No. 8 (Department's 1229 of May 1). As stated in that cable (WRB No. 8), Board is deeply disturbed over possibility that friction among private agencies operating in Portugal will interfere with the actual rescue of children from France. Board is relying on you to use your powers as WRB representative to prevent competitive duplication in this important rescue program. Our main goal is the saving of lives and nothing must prevent the attainment of this end.

Board appreciates having Weissman's views on this program. However, Board requests you send at once the views of Dr. Schwartz of the JDC, together with your own conclusions and recommendations.

As we stated in our No. 8 of May 1, the question of where to send the children who are actually rescued should be determined after they have been saved. The decision should be made on an individual case basis. In this connection it should be borne in mind that 1000 U.S. visas are presently available for these children in Spain and Portugal. Canadian visas are also available in addition to the Palestine certificates.

With respect to financing these rescue programs, the Board has publicly taken the position that it will rely on established private organizations for the necessary funds unless such private sources are inadequate. As you know the JDC is presently licensed to carry on a rescue program from Portugal and has substantial funds available for these operations. In addition, the World Jewish Congress has applied for a similar license, the issuance of which the Board has recommended. As long as adequate funds are available from private sources, Board is not (repeat not) prepared to authorize use of Board's funds either for rescue of these children or their maintenance after rescue.

Please advise all interested persons of foregoing.

This is War Refugee Board Cable to Lisbon No. 16.

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This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (SC00)

Lisbon

DATED: April 19, 1944

REC'D: 6:18 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
1168, April 19, 11 p.m. (Section One)
WRB number one

Special instructions regarding granting of visas to refugee children noted. Instructions have been sent to consular offices under this Legation. In view of difficulties in getting children out it is doubtful if any large number will be available before July 1, 1944. Department's 1017 April 12.

Legation has advised Portuguese Government of arrangements made and has requested it to grant necessary transit visas and hospitality; also that arrangements for financing children in Portugal will be undertaken by War Refugee Board. Will advise later reactions.

We are in contact with Isaac Weissman regarding plans for reception centers. See Department's telegram 1048, April 15. Extensive plans not necessary now but may be later. Will keep you advised of developments. Think reception will not present great difficulties.

Isaac Weissman, representative of World Jewish Congress, is attempting to bring 6000 hidden children clandestinely out of France through Spain to Portugal, and 3000 others who are registered in France; the latter, if possible, through legal channels. He must have War Refugee Board's cooperation, both financial and practical, otherwise promising plans may fail. Advise giving him all cooperation possible.

/End of Section One/

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MFG - 434

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Governmental agency (SCOO)

Lisbon

Dated April 19, 1944

Rec'd 1:20 a.m. 20th

Secretary of State
Washington

1168, April 19, 5 p.m. (Section Two)

Weissman has an organization but lacks sufficient funds to finance project. He estimates cost per child to be \$335 each, delivered in Portugal. On basis of 300 children per month this would involve a monthly appropriation of \$100,000. Is War Refugee Board prepared to guarantee this? If all were gotten out this would involve \$3,000,000; however we doubt any such number. Considerable funds must be available immediately as first small group are expected through within few days. Request immediate authorization to expend up to 100,000 on this project. Cable reply soonest.

It is intention of World Jewish Congress to send majority to Palestine. For that country visas are immediately available here with preference to children. This presents a problem as there will be a conflict between Zionist and non-Zionist Jewish organizations regarding ultimate destination of children. From here it seems easier and less expensive to send children to Palestine than to United States. Would suggest original plans be carried through unless strong objection your part. We need clear directive from Department and WRB on this point. Cable advice.

Any publicity regarding clandestine evacuation from France would endanger success. Publicity any project must be carefully scrutinized and Legation should be consulted in advance. Although reasons for publicity a minimum thereof will ensure most effective work.

NORWEB

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amlegation, Lisbon
DATED: May 1, 1944
NUMBER: 1229


Cable to Norweb, Lisbon, for Dexter

Reference your no. 1168, April 19, and no. 1183, April 20.
Following message is for Dexter from Pehle:

"In connection with proposals of Weissman concerning rescue of hidden children from France through Spain to Portugal, you are requested immediately to contact Dr. Joseph Schwartz of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee who, as you know, is extremely competent and experienced in this field. You should take advantage of his knowledge and background in this particular program. Schwartz is already operating such a rescue program under appropriate Treasury license, text of which was cabled to Ambassador Norweb; permitting the necessary communication with persons in enemy territory as well as the necessary financial transactions. It should be noted that aside from its wide experience in this type of operation and adequate personnel the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has substantial funds available and has shown its willingness to cooperate wholeheartedly on all our rescue programs.

"It is appreciated that the problem of working with the various private organizations in Portugal cannot be resolved from this end. While it is, of course, our policy to work in harmony with all organizations, the Board feels that the program to rescue children from France would be greatly endangered if two organizations without coordination through you should be trying to rescue the same children with the possibility that fewer lives are saved. Since our main goal is to rescue the maximum number of children in the shortest possible time, we feel you should use your best judgment in utilizing all agencies in those ways that will best achieve our aim.

"The problem of where to send the children who are actually rescued should, of course, be determined after they have been saved and depends upon existing facilities at that time."

This is WRB cable to Lisbon No. 8.

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COPY

MEMORANDUM

At a meeting in the American Embassy attended by Mr. Dobkin, representing the Jewish Agency for Palestine; Mr. Pilpel, representing the Joint Distribution Committee; and Mr. Weissman, representing the World Jewish Congress, with Mr. Mann and Dr. Dexter of the War Refugee Board present as intermediaries and observers, it was agreed by the interested parties that, in order to work more effectively for the rescue from enemy territory of those persons who are in imminent danger of death as a result of Nazi persecutions and oppressions because of their race, religion or political beliefs, there should be a co-operation and collaboration among the interested parties along the following lines:

1) There shall be created in Spain a Rescue Committee which shall have as its sole purpose the rescue of as many as possible of the above-described persecuted persons who are in imminent danger of death. Such Committee shall be composed of:

- a) Mr. Jules Jeffroykin, named by the Joint Distribution Committee;
- b) Mr. Joseph Croustillon, named by the World Jewish Congress; and
- c) Mr. David Sealtiel, named by the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

2) The Rescue Committee shall remain anonymous and no publicity whatsoever shall be given to it, its efforts, its members or the principals represented in connection with the work of such Committee. Such Committee shall act on behalf of all principals and there shall be a free and frank exchange of information and complete cooperation in all rescue work. The principals represented on such Committee shall conduct all rescue operations through it. It shall be the duty of the Rescue Committee to see that the principals in Portugal are informed of all operations of the Committee in Spain. Such information may be transmitted through such channels as the Rescue Committee may decide and such may be done by advising one of the principals in Portugal, who in turn will advise the others. However, the greatest care shall be taken to keep secret the work of such Committee and no reports of its activities shall be made to the United States except through the facilities of the War Refugee Board, which of course will see that the interested parties are advised.

3) All persons entering Spain as a result of the efforts of such Committee shall be turned over to the representatives in Spain of the

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Joint Distribution Committee, who shall care for such persons in the same manner as they have cared for them in the past except that all children (persons under the age of 16) shall be sent to Portugal, where they will be turned over at the Spanish-Portuguese border to a person of Portuguese nationality designated by the Youth Alyah Committee of Portugal.

4) The Youth Alyah Committee of Portugal for the present shall be composed of:

- a) Mr. Lichtenstein
- b) Mr. Pilpel
- c) Mr. Weissman

all of whom shall serve on the Youth Alyah Committee as individuals and not as representatives of organizations with which they are affiliated. The Committee may name additional persons, not to exceed two, to membership on the Committee. Such Committee shall report to the head offices of Youth Alyah in Jerusalem, which are headed by Miss Henrietta Szold and the Committee shall govern itself by majority vote.

5) The Youth Alyah Committee shall approve the budget submitted by the Jewish Community of Portugal (Comunidade) of the money to be expended for the care and welfare of all children. The Youth Alyah Committee shall determine the destination, training and education of the children. The Comunidade shall be charged with the technical and financial operations connected with the care and maintenance of the children; however, employees used in all operations for the care and maintenance of the children shall be mutually agreed upon by the Comunidade and the Youth Alyah Committee.

6) All relations with the foreign Governments or organizations regarding reimbursement for child care shall be exclusively conducted by the Committee or persons or organizations delegated by it.

The subject memorandum is accepted as the agreement between the interested parties.

The original of the subject memorandum shall be kept by Dr. Dexter, Representative of the War Refugee Board in Portugal. Initialled copies of such memorandum shall be given to each of the parties present at the discussion which gave rise to this agreement of cooperation and collaboration, and to Mr. Hart of the British Embassy, who in his capacity as an observer for that Embassy has seen and approved this agreement.

(Signed)
E. DOBKIN

WITNESS:

(Signed)
ROBERT PILPEL

(Signed)
JAMES H. MANN

(Signed)
ISAAC WEISSMAN

(Signed)
ROBERT C. DEXTER

(Signed)
J. HART

Lisbon, July 13, 1944

000392

DOCUMENT

153

CP-862
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (S [REDACTED] W)

Lisbon
DATED: September 14, 1944
REG'D: 10:52 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
2864, September 14, 11 a.m.
WRB 188

Portuguese Foreign Office, while sympathetic humanitarian aims expressed Embassy's notes 498, August 17 and 515, August 31, feels it impossible to admit refugees falling in classifications outlined Department's telegrams 2118, July 28 and 2332, August 24 without more effective guarantees from United States that all of these people, whether given US visas or not, will be speedily removed from Portugal by US if admitted. Ministry and government fear end of war and consequent decline US interest. Specifically object to statement that recipients of US visas after July 1, 1941 will only be admitted to the US subject to US immigration law and other limitations. Also object to indefiniteness of statement that US will evacuate those not given US visas as soon as possible. Desire US guarantee definite time limit on stay in Portugal for all coming under classifications DEPTTEL 2118 and 2332. Also statement regarding specific country which has in advance accepted those unable secure US visas, and guarantee transport for evacuation of all visa and non-visa within comparatively short period. If above requirements impossible to meet, and they seem very formidable, doubt if Portugal will take affirmative action above notes. Embassy is asked for definite written guarantee along above lines.

NORWEB

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DOCUMENT

154

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

October 3, 1944
8 p.m.

Amembassy
Lisbon
2656

The cable below is WEB 101.

Please refer to your No. 2875 of September 14 (WEB-189).

As you were advised in Department's No. 2118 of July 28 and 2332 of August 24, this Government has guaranteed that it will arrange for the maintenance in Portugal and the removal to the United States or to other areas outside Portugal of all refugees who are admitted to Portugal in accordance with the terms of those cables. It is the firm intention of this Government to comply fully with the terms of this guarantee, should the necessity arise. Until the number of such refugees and other similar facts are known, it is neither possible nor desirable to determine exactly where they will be taken. You may assume that all available havens, including Fedhala, will be used to fulfill this Government's guarantee.

HULL

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DOCUMENT

155

MAE
Distribution of
true reading only by
special arrangement [redacted] W)

June 24, 1944
4 p.m.

Amlegation
Lisbon
1819

The following forming WRB cable 39 is for Norweb Dexter and Mann.

The problem of certain Spanish loyalist and other refugees hiding in Portugal who desire to go to Mexico is familiar to you. Information has been received by the Board that the Mexican Government has approved the issuance of 500 residence visas for refugees of class described and has authorized the Mexican Minister in Lisbon to grant these visas to such of the described persons as he may desire. Presumably such visas will be issued following discussion between the Mexican Minister and Dexter and it is thought the Minister will rely largely upon Dexter to contact the proper persons. The Mexican Minister should be consulted to determine whether such instructions have been received. The result of inquiries on this point should be reported.

The expediting of the voyage of these refugees found qualified to Mexico is desired and accordingly the speeding of granting of transit visas has been agreed upon between the Department, the War Refugee Board and Unitarian Service Committee. The manner in which this may best be accomplished bearing in mind the danger to the applicants should they be apprehended before they have been granted both Mexican residence and United States transit visas should therefore be reported promptly. Please outline in detail your report of the procedure you expect to follow in order to procure visas in the earliest possible time for these people. Many if not all of the persons to whom Mexican visas will be issued will not (repeat not) it is thought have passports or other proper traveling documents. The transit visas will be placed upon consular forms 257 in conjunction with any document they may have including any furnished by the Mexican authorities. If it is impracticable for applicants to furnish photographs consult consular section of Legation regarding waiver of photograph requirement subject to furnishing fingerprints and submission of photograph after issuance of transit certificates. It is assumed regarding fingerprint requirements print will be taken at time applicants come out of hiding to receive their transit certificates from American consular officers. However, some sort of medical certificate will be required. Procurement with the least possible inconvenience and danger of apprehension for the applicants

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is desired. Dexter possibly may be able to arrange for applicants to obtain a certificate that they have no contagious disease and this will suffice for visa purposes.

It is contemplated that as soon as possible Dexter will procure and transmit through Legation or Consul the name, date and place of birth of each person who will receive a Mexican visa, together with information as to whether such person is or has been a Communist, and any other available relevant information which the Legation may suggest. These names will be checked by the Department of State which will instruct the Consul to issue visas unless objection to a specifically named person is perceived. A check of such names and advice of the action taken will occur as promptly as possible. Names will be cleared within one week after receipt, it is expected. The matter will be taken up with appropriate officials of this Government, in order to consider the exercise of existing authority to admit such persons temporarily, in any case involving Communist affiliation. After receipt of such instructions by the American Consul it would then be possible for the applicant to come out of hiding and receive his papers in one visit respectively to the Mexican officials and the American Consul. Provided you are certain in all cases that the International Police would permit passage from Portugal to the United States en route to Mexico he could then reveal himself to the International Police. It appears essential that plans be made so that both visas may be obtained expeditiously and that only one visit be made to the American Consulate, in view of danger of apprehension to the applicants. A full expression of your views in this matter should be given for benefit of Department and Board.

From the Department for Norway.

In the event it is not feasible to obtain photographs, this requirement will be waived or photographs will be submitted after issuance of transit certificates.

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(GLW)

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DOCUMENT

156

VMT-576
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (W)

Lisbon
DATED: June 28, 1944
REC'D: 11:59 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
2009, June 28, 1 p.m.

(WRB 39) This is WRB 85.

Mexican Legation has not (repeat not) received instructions
grant 500 residence visas referred to in Department's telegram 1819.
Mexican Legation already preparing lists but can do nothing further
until authorization received. Preparatory work along lines indicated
Department's 1819 and 1820 already begun. General suggestions re-
garding procedure being followed; detailed plans will be telegraphed
as they develop.

NORWEB

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DOCUMENT

157

BMK
Distribution of
true reading only
by special arrangement
(~~SECRET~~)
War Refugee Board

July 17, 1944
7 p.m.

Amembassy
Lisbon
2007

The following WRB cable 57 is for Dexter.

Please refer to your 2009 of June 28 concerning failure of Mexican Legation in Lisbon to receive instructions concerning the 500 residence visas.

The Board has been advised that General Candido Aguilar, the new Mexican Minister to Portugal who is expected to arrive in Lisbon the end of this month, has full authority to grant the 500 residence visas to persons whom he approves. Please confirm this with General Aguilar as soon as possible after his arrival and make no comment about it until such confirmation.

HULL
(GLW)

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DOCUMENT

158

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

Lisbon, October 16, 1944

AIR MAIL
No. 1071

[REDACTED]

Subject: Care for Refugees now in Portugal

The Honorable
The Secretary of State
Washington

Sir:

I have the honor to invite the attention of the Department to a matter which has been giving the Embassy a great deal of concern of late, due to the decision of the War Refugee Board to withdraw its representative from Portugal on or about December 1. The matter concerns plans for refugees still in Portugal who will presumably not be able to leave the country for some time unless some definite action is taken by the authorities of the United Nations.

It is not possible to fix absolutely the number of such refugees but at the present moment there are approximately 700 from various European countries in Portugal who are receiving assistance from the four American private agencies here, the American Friends Service Committee, the Joint Distribution Committee, the Unitarian Service Committee and the Refugee Relief Section of the National Catholic Welfare Council. In addition there are some hundreds of Spanish Republican Refugees. There is also a small number of refugees who are receiving aid from their Consulates, particularly Dutch, Belgians, French and Poles, but these need not concern us at the moment. In addition there is a certain number of refugees who still have funds of their own who are supporting themselves in Portugal. These also do not present any special problems. I should add that of the seven hundred of refugees above mentioned, most of whom are stateless, approximately five hundred are Jewish.

While there is no legal obligation, either on the part of the United States Government or governments of any of the other United Nations in respect to these people, there is a possible moral obligation. Many of them were admitted to Portugal either at the direct request of the American organizations mentioned or in some cases through the intervention of the War Refugee Board. It was the understanding of the Portuguese Government in most cases that they would ultimately be evacuated from this country. Portugal, as the Department realizes, has always considered itself a country of transit and

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not a country of final destination for refugees. It should also be made clear that none of these refugees is permitted to work in Portugal and consequently, for the most part, they are being supported by private funds which come from the United States. Further, the fact that they cannot work and support themselves has resulted in a great deal of moral deterioration. Some of them have definitely taken the position, almost inevitable under the circumstances, that they should be cared for.

A further problem which is very disturbing concerns what is going to happen to these individuals at the end of the war. Some of them ultimately may be returned to the country of their origin and others may conceivably secure visas for other lands. However, this will only be done after very considerable effort on the part of the organizations which are now taking care of them, and it is the feeling of the organizations that if they remain here, the chances of their leaving are very small. Another complicating factor in this connection is that most of the organizations, which for obvious reasons have maintained their European headquarters in Portugal since 1940, will sooner or later be moving their personnel to other areas where there are greater needs, and this will leave this particular group of refugees without anyone to look after their interests. This would not only be unfortunate for the refugees themselves but the Embassy feels that it might present a problem in American-Portuguese relations as the Portuguese might feel that American interests were responsible for bringing these people here and that we have left them holding the bag. A sad aspect of the situation is that these are the refugees who for one reason or another would find it the most difficult to move unless there were considerable pressure behind them.

In view of these facts, the Embassy has not only given considerable thought to what might be done to these unfortunate people but has also consulted the various private agencies involved. It has occurred to the Embassy that if the camp at Fedhala is to be maintained for some time, one solution would be to send as many of these people as possible, excluding those who have possibilities for visas elsewhere or who can perhaps shortly return to their native lands, to Fedhala. There are several obvious advantages to such a plan:

1. There is no question but that the refugees will be far better cared for in the camp at Fedhala than they are here in Portugal at present, and they would be provided with a certain amount of occupation. If they were able to work and opportunities were available, they could possibly be given remunerative employment. In addition, there are in the camp excellent schools for children which are entirely missing here in Portugal and there is good medical and social care.

2. They would have a far better chance of being returned to their homelands or sent elsewhere from Fedhala than they would have here in

Portugal. At the end of the war or even sooner, the refugees here would be forgotten. There would be no particular foreign pressure for their care or plans made for their ultimate destination. If they were in Fedhala, obviously the camp would sooner or later be liquidated and careful plans could be made for each individual.

3. This plan would obviously be looked on with favor by the Portuguese authorities and it would inevitably result in a willingness on the part of the Portuguese to grant Portuguese transit visas for other refugees still in occupied territory. It seems true that not many of them would ultimately reach Portugal but the fact that the Portuguese granted visas might save the lives of many in occupied territories even if they never came to Portugal.

Of course, this suggestion is being made only tentatively by the Embassy as it has no definite information as to the plans for Fedhala. At the same time, the Embassy understands that both the British and the American Governments have decided for the time being not to liquidate the camp and it seems that the suggestion, if it were possible to carry it out, would accomplish several results. First, it would sweeten American-Portuguese relations; second, it would fulfill whatever moral obligations the United States and the United Nations have toward these unfortunate people; and third, it would give them far better care for the present and infinitely better prospects for the future.

The Embassy should add that reports which it has had regarding Fedhala are excellent. The people there are well cared for and everything possible is being done to set them on their feet. It is impossible to do anything here except simply provide for their maintenance.

There would, of course, be certain difficulties in the way. Some of the refugees who are thoroughly demoralized would not be willing to go voluntarily to a place where they had to work. Others would object to going to a camp. Incidentally, the name might be changed to reception center or something of this sort which would meet that objection. Still others would feel that they had an immediate chance to go back to their homeland when such chance was by no means immediate. All of these problems would have to be met here but the Embassy believes that it would have the cooperation of the private agencies and that it itself could do a good deal in the way of persuasion.

In view of the fact that the Representative of the War Refugee Board is scheduled for withdrawal December 1, and since the major part of the work, if the plan were approved by the authorities concerned, would fall upon him so far as it is an Embassy responsibility, it is hoped that the Embassy may have the comments of the Department and the War Refugee Board and, if possible, a definite decision at an early date.

It is assumed that the War Refugee Board will be interested in this despatch, and if the Department perceives no objection, it is hoped that it will be transmitted to the Board.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

(Signed)
EDWARD S. CROCKER

Edward S. Crocker
Counselor of Embassy

RCD:ew

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

159



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OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 10, 1944

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

Reference is made to the letter dated October 16, 1944 from Mr. Edward S. Crocker, Counselor of the Embassy, to the Secretary of State, requesting the War Refugee Board's comment upon the Embassy's suggestion that those among the 700 refugees from various European countries now in Portugal, not having immediate migratory possibilities, be evacuated to Camp Lyautey at Fedhala.

It is the War Refugee Board's understanding that very few of the refugees referred to in Mr. Crocker's letter were admitted to Portugal at the request of the Board. It is understood further that the few refugees so admitted at the request of the Board are presently being cared for by the Joint Distribution Committee which has likewise charged itself with the responsibility for their ultimate evacuation from Portugal.

Upon receipt of the above letter, the Joint Distribution Committee was informally queried concerning its future plans with regard to these and the other refugees now under its care in Portugal. We have been advised that regardless of any transfer of its European headquarters the Joint Distribution Committee has no intention of withdrawing its support from the 400 to 500 refugees now under its care in Portugal.

In view of the above and in view also of the fact that the Portuguese Government is not pressing for the evacuation of these refugees, it would seem premature at the present time to recommend their transfer to Camp Lyautey.

A copy of this letter is being forwarded to the Secretary of State.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)

J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle

Executive Director

Honorable R. Henry Norweb,
United States Ambassador,
Embassy of the United States of America,
Lisbon, Portugal.

000403

DOCUMENT

160

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: Amlegation, Bern
DATED: March 27, 1944
NUMBER: 1023


From War Refugee Board to Harrison.

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

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

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161

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Embassy, Ankara
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: April 4, 1944
NUMBER: 596

As Ankara's number 22 the following message is from the Ambassador and Hirschman for the War Refugee Board.

Simond of the International Red Cross has had a talk with the German Ambassador at our suggestion. This morning Simond informs us that von Papen agreed in the course of their talk (1) to urgently recommend to the Government of Germany that the SS TARI be given safe conduct and (2) that in its treatment of the Jews in Hungary the German Government exercise restraint.

Von Papen's sincerity impressed Simond who believes he (von Papen) will make these recommendations to the German Government but is, of course, uncertain regarding the German Government's reception of them.

STEINHARDT

DCR:MPL
4/7/44

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: Amembassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 2, 1944
NUMBER: 794

The Ambassador sends the following for WRB'S attention.

Today, when I invited the attention of the Assistant Secretary General of the Foreign Office to the fact that no Jewish refugees have arrived from Hungary of late and asked whether the Turk Consul in Budapest might be withholding the granting of Turk visas for any reason in spite of the assurance I received from the Foreign Minister that the granting of the visas would be facilitated, I was informed by Erkin that the Turk Consul at Budapest had sent the Foreign Office word that every Jew entering the Turk Consulate in Budapest was arrested as soon as he left and transported to an unknown place.

The foregoing is WRB'S 50 from Ankara.

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STEINHARDT

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163

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, Ankara
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 5, 1944
NUMBER: 1010

Ambassador sends the following for WRB.

Referring to message Number 69 from Ankara and Department's telegram of June 2, Number 499, it is my opinion that any approach to the Hungarian Minister and his staff here would be of no use whatever, since their pro-Nazi attitude is notorious, as the Department knows.

In connection with the last paragraph of cable referred to, it is thought that the Turkish agreement to an "arrangement" involving violation of their own laws by allowing refugees or any other individuals to enter Turkey without Turkish visas is an extremely remote possibility. Separate representations concerning each group or individual, upon arrival have been presented in obtaining permission for Jewish refugees to enter and pass through Turkey without Turkish visas, and this fact should be borne in mind in this connection. I believe, when appropriate representations are made in each case, the Jewish refugees entering Turkey from Bulgaria will be treated with the same kindness as have those coming from Greece.

STEINHARDT

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164

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: May 23, 1944
NUMBER: 1786

For Minister Harrison and McClelland, Bern, Switzerland.

This Government gravely concerned by reports of measures looking to mass-extirmination of Jews in Hungary.

Please request Swiss authorities to obtain as speedily as possible detailed information from Swiss mission in Budapest concerning treatment of Jews in Hungary and to inform you of results of inquiry. Advise Department of results without delay.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 24.

- HULL

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165

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: May 25, 1944
NUMBER: 1805

Attention of McClelland and Minister Harrison.

Please represent to the Swiss Government that, according to persistent and seemingly authentic reports, systematic mass-extermination of Jews in Hungary has begun. The lives of 800,000 human beings in Hungary may well depend on the restraint that may result from the presence in that country of the largest possible number of foreign observers. To this end, please urge appropriate authorities in the interest of most elementary humanity to take immediate steps to increase to the largest possible extent the numbers of Swiss diplomatic and consular personnel in Hungary and to distribute them as widely as possible throughout the country.

It is hoped, of course, that all such diplomatic and consular representatives will use all means available to them to persuade individuals and officials to desist from further barbarisms.

Please inform Department forthwith of extent to which Swiss Government is cooperating in this matter.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 26.

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DMH-502
Distribution of true reading
only by special arrangement
(██████ W)

Stockholm
DATED June 21, 1944
REC'D 2:50 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
U. S. Urgent
2231, June 21, 1 p.m.

Please repeat to War Refugee Board as Legation's number 31.

Mr. Boheman has informed me that Mr. Raoul Wallenberg will be appointed an Attache to the Swedish Legation at Budapest for the specific purpose of following and reporting on situation with respect to persecution of Jews and minorities. It is likewise intention of Foreign Office to secure if possible an appointment as representative of other Swedish Red Cross for Professor Maltet, a Swede who is now teaching in University of Budapest. Professor Maltet will not be connected with Swedish Legation but will cooperate closely with Wallenberg (my 2069, June 9, 6 p.m.). As Wallenberg's functions in Budapest will be purely official and he has for time of appointment severed all business connections, Boheman does not anticipate any trouble in his securing the necessary visa. He said if the visa is refused the Swedish Government will simply refuse in turn to receive the Hungarian Charge d'Affaires. Mr. Boheman made it clear that Foreign Office and his government are disposed to cooperate as fully as possible in all humanitarian endeavors and the appointment of this Attache is undoubtedly an evidence of official Swedish desire to conform to the wishes expressed in Department's telegram 1010, May 25, 2 p.m.

Olsen and I are of opinion that War Refugee Board should be considering ways and means of implementing this action of Swedish Government particularly with respect to financial support it may be possible to arrange for any concrete rescue and relief progress which may be developed.

JOHNSON

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167

TELEGRAM SENT

July 7, 1944

([REDACTED])

ALLEGATION,
STOCKHOLM.

1353

The War Refugee Board cable 41 below is for Johnson and Olsen.

Bohm, Anderson and Polen Hjalpen reports received. Reference your 2331, 2344, and 2360 of June 21, 27 and 28, your 31, 39 and 40 to War Refugee Board. While it is difficult to attempt precisely to outline program from here, the following general approach is suggested:

Since money and favorable post-war consideration may motivate action impeding, relaxing or slowing down tempo of persecution and facilitate escapes and concealments, it should be ascertained in what quarters such inducements may be effective. In this connection, contact should be established, at discretion, with appropriate persons mentioned in Department's 1246 of June 23 and such others as may become known. If circumstances warrant funds will be made available at neutral bank for post-war use or in part in local currency now, procured against blocked counter-value here or in neutral bank. For latter purpose local funds may be procurable from appropriate persons mentioned in Department's 1246 such as (c) in first group and such others as may become known. Whenever a concrete proposal based on financial arrangements of substantial character or on favorable post-war consideration is broached, the matter should be referred to the Board for clearance, which will require evidence of effectiveness and good faith in the meantime. In order to care for less substantial transactions a fund of \$50,000 will be placed at Olsen's disposal which may be used in his discretion in addition to the fund already available to him for discretionary use.

The problem may be dealt with on various levels such as high official, low official and unofficial, central and local. In connection with unofficial channels an informed source suggests that ships and barges going down the Danube are generally empty and may afford a means of escape for a limited number of refugees in the guise of seamen or otherwise. Same source suggests that skippers can be approached on financial basis and crews through so-called communist channels. Board is also advised that railroad line from Budapest to Mohacs, said to be about ten miles from partisan-controlled Yugoslav territory, might afford similar opportunities if contacts made with trainmen through what are termed communist channels. Board further advised that Transylvanian Unitarian Church, socialist and partisan groups may be in a position because of

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geographical situation and absence of real occupation to shelter refugees if they can reach that area. In addition, Board believes that Roman Catholic clergy and Nuncio may be helpful both in action and with advice.

Further in connection with lower official and unofficial channels the following list of persons, secured from same sources as list given in Department's 1246 may be useful: In or near Budapest: (a) Dezso Vilmanyi, said to be former official in the Police Headquarters in Budapest, in 1939 transferred to the Police Department in the Ministry of Interior, in charge of passport matters and to have granted many persons passports for consideration. Also said to have ingratiated himself with the Arrowcross Party and was counted among their fellow travelers by them, but that Jews could always count on his favors if they met his terms, in cash; (b) Zoltan Timke, said to be Chief Prosecutor, Superior Court of Hungary, a chauvinist and reactionary, but opposed to the Nazis. It is said that he can be depended on to help Jews of reactionary and financial-commercial background; (c) Colonel Denes Deak-Horvath, said to be wealthy, independent, and politically unaffiliated. It is said that he is Chairman of Barcs Farmers' Granary Cooperative, General Manager of Hungarian Food Supply Co. It is also said that since 1940, he has been one of the leaders of the action protecting Polish refugees in Hungary and that he was fined for violation of the anti-Jewish laws. He is also said to have close connections with certain members of the present Hungarian government through which he may render useful services to our cause, notably with Anthony Kunder, the present minister of commerce; (d) Rezse Koszeghy, said to be 49 years of age, a native of Hungary of German-Swabian descent, and a former official of the National Bank of Hungary who is now general manager of a textile and fur concern. Said to be trustworthy as assistant and go between and to have a student son in Switzerland. Said to have good contact with rank and file in government officers; (e) Dr. Jenő Bozoky, said to be a lawyer who for a number of years very skilfully played the role of an ardent Nazi and anti-Semite, with the objective of helping distressed or endangered Jews and liberals.

With reference to high official channels exploration may be made of the possibility, suggested by pages 29 and following of Bohm's report, of evacuation of Jews and persons similarly situated belonging to specific groups such as (a) holders of Palestine certificates, (b) holders of visas for entry into neutral countries, (c) persons to whom the issuance of visas for entry into an American republic is authorized provided they appear personally therefor before a consular officer in a neutral country, (d) persons holding passports or consular documents issued in the names of American republics, or who are under the protection of a neutral country as indicated by Bohm at page 26, (e) women and children, (f) aged and infirm men, and (g) parents, husbands, wives, children, etc., of American citizens.

You should advise Wallenberg of the foregoing to the extent that you deem advisable and inform him that the same constitutes a general outline of a program which the Board believes can be pursued. While he cannot, of course, act as the Board's representative, nor purport to act in its name, he can, whenever advisable, indicate that as a Swede he is free to communicate with Stockholm where a representative of the Board is stationed. He may thus express his willingness to lay before the Board's representative specific proposals if in any particular case he should deem so doing to be advisable, or if by reason of the nature of the proposal Olsen's or the Board's approval is necessary. Wallenberg should have with him copies of the President's Statement of March 24, Department's 502 of March 24, the Statement of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Department's 1311 of July 1, the Statement of June 28, and Archbishop Spellman's statement, Department's 1283 of June 29. These he might on proper occasions call to the attention of appropriate persons, expressing the view, having just come from outside German-controlled territory, that there is no question of American determination to see to it that those who share the guilt will be punished, but that helpful conduct now may result in more favorable consideration than actions heretofore might warrant.

Wallenberg should consult with the representative of the International Red Cross and impress upon him the urgent need of increasing Intercross representation in Hungary and intercession in an effort to secure permission to visit and inspect concentration camps, ghettos and other places of detention. Wallenberg might undertake also to see whether such permission might be granted him and his colleagues. To the extent that you deem it advisable you may call Wallenberg's attention to Bohm's suggestions so that he may undertake to determine their feasibility and whether they offer channels through which effective measures can be taken. Please express to the Foreign Office and to Wallenberg the Board's sincere appreciation for their wholehearted cooperation. The Board is aware of Sweden's great concern and active measures of assistance for the victims of Nazi persecution and is confident that through cooperation such as has been evidenced in this and other instances, further lives will be saved.

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WRB Box 110 NYC

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168

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

848/ICO/MET

Stockholm, Sweden
November 14, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter which I received recently from Mr. Wallenberg regarding the assistance which we have given to the Hungarian Jews. I believe this letter will be of much interest to the Board.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
IVER C. OLSEN

Iver C. Olsen ,
Special Attache for
War-Refugee Board

Enclosure - 1

000414

COPY
Königlich
Schwedische Gesandtschaft

W./T.

Budapest, 12th Okt. 1944.

Mr. Olssen,
Strandvägen 7
Stockholm.

Dear Mr. Olssen,

When I now look back on the 3 months I have spent here I can only say, that it has been a most interesting experience and I believe, not quite without results.

When I arrived, the situation of the Jews was very bad indeed. The development of military events and a natural psychological reaction among the Hungarian people have changed many things. We at the Swedish Legation have perhaps only been an instrument to convert this outside influence into action in the various Government offices. I have taken quite a strong line in this respect although, of course I have had to keep within the limits assigned to me as a neutral.

It has been my object all the time, to try to help all Jews. This, however, could only be achieved by helping a whole group of Jews to get rid of their stars. I have worked on the hypothesis that those, who were no longer under the obligation to carry the star, would help their fellow sufferers. Also I have carried out a great deal of general enlightenment work among the keymen in charge of Jewish questions here.

I am quite sure, that our activity - and that means in the last instance yours - is responsible for the freeing at this time of the interned Jews. These numbered many hundreds. At first only those were freed who possessed Swedish protective passports, but later all who had not committed a criminal offence, were freed.

I have also received a promise that all "Swedish" Jews in civilian service (Arbeitsdienst) will be ordered back. The number of these Jews is about 500 but I doubt that more than half of them may be brought back from their present assignments, which are situated partly in front-districts.

000415

Mr. Olssen, believe me, your donation in behalf of the Hungarian Jews has made an enormous amount of good. I think that they will have every reason to thank you for having initiated and supported the Swedish Jewish action the way you have in such a splendid manner.

Yours faithfully

(Signed)
R. WALLENBERG

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

169



December 6, 1944

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My dear Mr. Minister:

In connection with the outstanding service performed by Mr. Raoul Wallenberg of the Swedish Foreign Office in the program to save and protect the persecuted peoples in Hungary, the Board wishes to send him the enclosed letter of appreciation which is transmitted to you herewith for delivery to Mr. Wallenberg.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank you personally for the cooperation and deep interest which have been given to the operations of the War Refugee Board in Sweden by you and the Legation staff.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed)
J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Herschel V. Johnson,
American Minister,
Stockholm, Sweden.

Enclosure

000417

COPY

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

WAR REFUGEE BOARD

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

December 6, 1944



OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My dear Mr. Wallenberg:

Through the American Minister in Stockholm and Mr. Iver Olsen, the War Refugee Board has kept closely informed of the difficult and important work you have been doing to alleviate the situation of the Jewish people in Hungary. We have followed with keen interest the reports of the steps which you have taken to accomplish your mission and the personal devotion which you have given to saving and protecting the innocent victims of Nazi persecution.

I think that no one who has participated in this great task can escape some feeling of frustration in that, because of circumstances beyond our control, our efforts have not met with complete success. On the other hand, there have been measurable achievements in the face of the obstacles which had to be encountered, and it is our conviction that you have made a very great personal contribution to the success which has been realized in these endeavors.

On behalf of the War Refugee Board I wish to express to you our very deep appreciation for your splendid cooperation and for the vigor and ingenuity which you brought to our common humanitarian undertaking.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)

J. W. PEHLE

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Raoul Wallenberg,
Swedish Foreign Office,
Stockholm, Sweden.

000418

DOCUMENT

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: May 25, 1944
NUMBER: 1806

Following is for Minister Harrison and McClelland, Bern, Switzerland.

Reference is made to Department's 1023 of March 27 and your 2312 of April 13.

Please represent to Intercross that according to persistent and seemingly authentic reports, systematic mass-extirmination of Jews in Hungary has begun. The lives of 800,000 human beings may well depend on the restraint that may result from the presence in Hungary of the largest possible number of international observers. It is difficult to believe that measures designed to check such slaughter directly or indirectly can be considered by Intercross as "intruding into domestic policy" within the meaning of your 2312. If the measure suggested is unprecedented, so is the emergency.

Please convey to Intercross the urgent hope of the Government of the United States that the special delegation requested in our 1023 will be sent forthwith to Hungary. Failing this, it is felt that a considerable and immediate enlarging of Intercross delegation in Budapest and throughout Hungary, especially in the localities in which Jews are being concentrated, is an elementary humanitarian obligation of Intercross in face of this man-made disaster.

Confident that Intercross will rise to the emergency, this Government would appreciate receiving prompt information as to the number and distribution of Intercross delegates in Hungary and as to the extent to which they are able to observe the treatment of Jews in that country.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 27.

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DOCUMENT

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MS-212
Secretary of State,
Washington.
4896, 29th

Plain
Bern
DATED: July 29, 1944
REC'D: 4:30 p.m., 30th

On July 18 ICRC published following official communique:
"Following steps taken in Budapest by ICRC in Geneva Hungarian authorities have given the Committee official assurances that transportation of Jews beyond Hungarian frontiers has ceased and that the ICRC are authorized to furnish relief to Jews who are interned or in forced residence in Hungary. The Committee are furthermore empowered to cooperate in the evacuation of all Jewish children under ten years of age who are in possession of visas to reception countries and all Jews in Hungary holding entrance visas to Palestine will receive permission from the authorities to leave for that country."

I discussed this whole question with Carl Burckhardt, acting president of ICRC, on July 24 and Committee's communique contains substantially all important points of Hungarian Government's message.

I recommended to Burckhardt that ICRC discuss with Hungarian Government question of raising age limit of children to be evacuated to sixteen years for boys and eighteen years for girls.

ICRC is awaiting detailed confirmatory information from its delegate in Budapest, particularly regarding evidence that ICRC representatives will actually be accorded local permission and practical possibilities carry out such a relief and evacuation program. ICRC has already dispatched one of its delegates from Berlin to Budapest and plans to send three more representatives as soon as possible. This initial delegation will probably include Suzanne Ferriere, ICRC member, as expert for emigration questions, a certain Dr. Fischer, reputedly capable man, former ICRC delegate in Cairo, as head of mission and a third charged with financial and purchasing questions. Definite choice this first mission will be decided in special ICRC meeting this week. Burckhardt intimated that there might be possibility arranging dispatch to Hungary one or two capable Swiss persons as confidential WRB representatives probably attached to ICRC mission.

Will keep you informed this encouraging new turn events.

HARRISON

000420

DOCUMENT

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RECT - 282

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

Bern

DATED: May 25, 1944

REC'D: 7 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
U. S. Urgent.
3346, May 25, 4 p.m., (Section One).

For Elmer Davis, Carroll Wenner OWI from Mayer. BWVAE 24493.

Further reference our 1912.30

According to all reliable information (including some published in Hungarian newspapers particularly provincial press) unmistakably steps are being taken preparatory to massive deportation and extermination of the Jewish population especially in Carpatho-Russian and Maramaros regions. The number of people immediately involved is about 200,000 and the action shows every sign of being extended to the Jewish population in Hungary proper.

This action has all the namelessly tragic and brutal earmarks of similar actions carried out in Poland by the Nazis and their henchmen. It is being most savagely taken in northeastern Hungary (along Slovakian border and in Carpatho-Ukraine) the principal towns involved being:

Kassa, Ungvar, Munkacs, Beregszasz, Maramaros, Sziget and Nagy Szollos. About 200,000 Jews live in this region (namely some 20% to 22% of the population.)

During the second half of April concentration of the Jewish population began in the districts of Ung, Bereg, Maramaros, and Perenyvidek. In the outlying towns they were first assembled in the synagogues and in the case of the town of Ungvar (district of Ung) concentrated in the Moskovics tile factory, in the Kaposerstrasse and Randvanyerstrasse. At first some 8,700 Jews from surrounding townships were brought here; later when the number grew to 14,000 and there was not room enough in the tile factory, those newly driven in were concentrated from April 30 on in a wood yard belonging to Glueck and Company. The Mayor of the town of Ungvar, Dr. Megay Laszlo, as a result of the general attempt of Christian population to bring clothing and food to these Jews, ordered that such concentration camps be isolated and that all traffic in adjoining streets be stopped. He further requested central authorities "to get the Jews out of town as quickly as possible because their presence endangered not only the public peace but hygienic conditions."

[End of Section One]

000421

NJK - 247

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

Bern

DATED: May 25, 1944

REC'D: 5:36 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington
U. S. Urgent.
3346, May 25, 8 a.m. (Section Two)

In the town Munkacs Jews from surrounding villages were concentrated at first in area bordered by Kostuhlajos and Jrinyi streets and later transferred to cattle market in the same town. This brutal action considerably aroused the whole (*).

In the town Beregszasz Jews from outlying districts were brought to Vari and Kent tile factories. Vari tile factory could house a maximum of four thousand people but twelve thousand to fifteen thousand persons were crowded into it.

In the town Kassa Jews were also concentrated in the open cattle market and in the municipal slaughter houses. In this town in particular the action aroused great popular feeling since the Jewish population played an important part in the town's industries and commercial establishments.

For all reliable reports - and this is even reflected in the Hungarian press especially in the provinces - the Hungarian population have not sympathized with such brutal anti-Jewish measures. On the contrary they have openly sided with the persecuted Jews and have continually attempted to aid these wretched souls by bringing them food and clothing.

On the other hand the Hungarian authorities have taken severe measures to isolate such concentration camps and to cut off all assistance from outside. To quote from one paper: "The mass attempt to get food and clothing to Jews in concentration areas on the part of the population has been incomprehensible phenomenon. As a result the authorities have been forced to take the necessary police measures to cut off such Jews from all contact with the population."

The lot of these Jews in such improvised "camps" is wretched. Such cattle markets, tile factories and wood yards are almost completely devoid of sanitary facilities and in many instances thousands of men women children old and sick people are forced to live in the open under conditions of frightful crowding and promiscuity. They were permitted to take nothing with them in the

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way of blankets or covers and it becomes tragically obvious that a great many will die of exposure disease and slow starvation even before they are jammed 80 to 100 to a wagon into cattle cars for deportation.

End of Section Two

000423

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 25, 1944 (Section Three)
NO: 3346

It is my urgent suggestion, in close collaboration with the War Refugee Board representative here, that the Government of the USSR be prevailed upon in regard to the purpose of the occupation of Hungary by the Nazis, to associate itself with the declaration of March 24 by President Roosevelt (Eden March 31). Since the Soviet armies are standing on the frontiers of Hungary and the fear of the Russians in the hearts of a large number of "collaborators" in Hungary is mortal, a declaration by the Soviet Union would have all the more weight. A man who returned from Hungary quite recently and who had seen Horthy gave a reliable report that the old man stated that the persecution of the Jews was deplorable in his opinion; but, on the other hand, he felt strongly that as for the Germans who are defending Hungary from the "Bolshevik peril", everything should be done to placate them.

Logically it is to be expected furthermore that the Russians would issue such a statement since their government carried out the "Kharkov trials" after having subscribed to the "War criminal" clause of Moscow agreement.

/End of Section Three/

000424

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: May 25, 1944, 4 p.m.
NO: 3346 (Section Four).

By pamphlets especially should the Russian appeal (or rather threat) be publicized since most of the Hungarians do not possess radios in the regions concerned.

In any propaganda campaign the emphasis ought to be placed on the complicity of the satellite Hungarian authorities' inveigling, lending willing hands and carrying out this persecution. Facts which should not be forgotten are that the former Government of Hungary not only had pursued a long-standing policy of anti-semitism, but also shared in the guilt of deportation to Galicia and Poland of some 17,000 Jews (for the reason that they were not able to establish adequately their Hungarian nationality) and Jews deported in 1942 in forced labor battalion to the eastern front in most cases to death from military action, exposure, disease and hunger; and had been directly responsible for the massacres of several thousand Serbs and Jews at Zabljak and Ugvidik (Novi Sad) in January of the same year.

In addition, the Soviet Government should associate itself with the declaration of the President on the event of the establishment of the War Refugee Board, it is strongly suggested.

[End of Section Four]

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: May 25, 1944
NO: 3346 (Section Five)

Copy of following cable should be sent to WRB.

Certain channels of particular value (especially Communist) would be opened up, through which relief and rescue operations from Switzerland could be carried on in the Balkans if, like the British Government, the Russians would associate themselves with this initiative. Several well-organized underground channels will either be only partly available to WRB activities from Switzerland or remain entirely closed unless the Soviet Government issues such a declaration. (As the work might be hampered and the reaction unfavorable, no mention of Switzerland in particular should be made in any such declaration).

Lastly, it is suggested, on the basis of several appeals which have been received from very dependable groups working in Hungary, that the intention of the Government of the United States to establish provisional havens of refuge be reaffirmed by the WRB or even better by the President on behalf of the work of WRB. In North Africa probably and in former Italian Tripoli and Cyrenaica-Bengasi, particularly as has been suggested, all Jewish and other persecuted fugitives from the Balkans and Hungary -- pending the time they can go back to their homes -- will be given shelter and refuge in such havens. The Inter-cross might also be influenced in this way to become more active.

(Message ends).

HARRISON

000426

DOCUMENT

173

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 24, 1944
NUMBER: 4041

McClelland sends the following for the War Refugee Board.

Reference is made herewith to Legation's message dated June 17, No. 3867, paragraph three.

Now there is no doubt that the majority of the Jewish population east of the Danube, especially in eastern, northern, and north eastern Hungary, has been deported to Poland. Further reliable information confirming this fact has come in in the course of the past two weeks from the following independent sources: (a) Swiss official employee just returned from Budapest, (b) railway workers in Czech resistance movement, (c) other reliable secret source. Regard information as to sources as absolutely confidential since any publicity regarding them would endanger lives.

Prior to the deportations, there were two weeks to a month of brutal concentration during which thousands of Jews were crowded together in primitive quarters with insufficient food, clothing and water, regardless of state of health, sex or age. The Hungarian gendarmerie on Laszlo Endre's orders largely carried out this action.

Apparently the actual large-scale deportations began about May 15 and lasted until the middle of June. The movement involved 12,000 persons per day: about 7,000 through Sub-Carpatho-Russia and 5,000 through Slovakia. Characteristic of such actions, people were deported 60 to 70 per sealed freight wagon for a trip of two to three days without adequate water or food, probably resulting in many deaths en route.

Particularly used were the following stretches of railroad:
(1) Csap-Kaschau-Presov-Lubotin-Nowysacz in direction of Oswiecim;
(2) Satoraljaiuhaly-Leginamich Wlany-Michaloves-Medzilaborce. Also many thousand troops to and from the Polish front were transported daily over this line; (3) Munkacs-Lavoczne; (4) Galanta-Sered-Leopoldstadt-Novemesto-Trencin; (5) Vrutky-Zilina.

It is urged by all sources of this information in Slovakia and Hungary that vital sections of these lines especially bridges along (1) be bombed as the only possible means of slowing down or stopping future deportations. (This is submitted by me as a proposal of these agencies and I can venture no opinion on its utility.)

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At least 335,000 Jews already have been deported from the following regions according to figures received.

Approximately 130,000 in Sub-Carpathia and Ruthenia mainly from the towns of Beregezac, Felsövial, Huszt, Nagyeszollos, Maramaros, Sziget, Munkacs, Tecar and Ungvar.

Approximately 90,000 in Transylvania from Bozstorce, Des, Koloszvar, Nares Vasarbely, Nagybenya, Nagyvarad, Szaszregan, Szilagy, and Somlyo.

In northern Iakaschau, Gyongyos, Satoraljaújhal and Sarospatak.

Approximately 75,000 in the Tisz region from: Kisvarda, Matcazalka, Nagykaroly, Nyiregyhaza and Szatmar Nemeti.

It is also reported by one source that deportations of approximately 20,000 have taken place from certain towns in southern Hungary such as Bacz(*)ya, Baja, Nagykanizsa, Ujvidak and Szabadka and further exi(*)tions also being made deport Jews from towns of Dunaszerdahely, Cyocer, Komarom, Miskele, Pecs and Szombathely where persons are already concentrated.

Some 350,000 Jews have already been concentrated in Budapest and environs. This began around June 16 and on the 21st it was to be finished. In the city proper they have been settled in requisitioned blocks of houses in a chess board pattern so that they will not escape bombardment.

Some 15,000 Jews have been crowded into a ghetto in the factory zone along the Danube in Ujpest near Budapest.

The principal individuals in the Sztojay Government responsible for this persecution of Jews are as follows: Laszlo Endre, former sub-prefect of county of Pest now in Ministry of Interior; Laszlo Baky, also Interior, and Andre Jarces, Minister of Interior.

In an effort to check such continued deportations Termancezov (*) from the United States, we recommend British and Soviet (*) broadcasts and especially leaflets. If it is possible, the Vatican should be prevailed upon to associate itself with such protest.

There is little doubt that many of these Hungarian Jews are being sent to the extermination camps of Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and Birkenau (Rajska) in western Upper Silesia where, according to recent reports, since early summer 1942 at least 1,500,000 Jews have

been killed. There is evidence that already in January 1944 preparations were being made to receive and exterminate Hungarian Jews in these camps. Soon a detailed report on these camps will be cabled.

HARRISON

(*) Apparent omissions

000429

DOCUMENT

174

KEM - 489
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (S W)

Stockholm
DATED: June 17, 1944
REC'D: 9:11 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
2187, June 17, 8 p.m.

Following summarizes principal features of Bohm's report of the situation in Hungary, which has been forwarded airmail by pouch leaving here June 20.

This is our 32 for WRB supplementing our 27 (Legation's 2098, June 12, 9 a.m.).

Number of refugees in Hungary estimated to require relief and protection placed at more than one million. Group comprises following citizens:

Political refugees: Social Democrats, Liberals, Communists and others, three thousand.

Non-Hungarian Jews who escaped from Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Rumania and other neighboring countries, twenty thousand.

Hungarian Jews, eight hundred thousand, plus an additional two hundred thousand involved through Nuremberg and other laws and decrees.

Polish citizens and Polish soldiers, were approximately twenty thousand but impossible to determine how many are still alive.

Official regulations against Jews issued through May include dispossession of flats, confiscation of cash and securities, dispossession of agricultural properties, personal and household effects, closing of approximately forty-five thousand stores; destruction of all books by Jewish authors; conscription of all persons between 18 and 48 for forced labor.

All communities have been instructed to place their Jewish population in concentration camps and ghettos. A Secretary of State for Jewish Affairs personally made tours of inspection to determine whether regulations were carried out, thereafter made public announcements of great success of program. It was announced that 320,000 Jews had been placed in concentration camps in provincial areas east of Theis. Reports of cruelty, torture, murders and suicides appear confirmed.

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Swedish Foreign Office has, in approximately 800 individual cases, instructed its Legation in Budapest to advise Hungarian authorities that such persons have protection of Swedish Government and have been promised entry visas. This has been helpful in certain cases, in others of no avail.

Following recommendations are made in report as to rescue operations:

To have neutral countries, on basis of Hungarian official declaration that its Jewish problem can only be solved by evacuation of this element, offer to supply haven for these refugees and to assist in their evacuation. It is not considered likely that Hungarians would permit politically compromised Jews to depart, but there is a chance they would permit other groups in which neutral countries have expressed a protective interest to depart, also others who are eligible to go to Palestine, and still other groups to be determined by negotiations. Evacuation would require some bargaining with certain German officials and evacuation operations in general unquestionably will be expensive.

Report contains following suggestions for relief operations:

Food and medicine is of tremendous urgency for people in concentration camps and ghettos, much of which could be obtained locally if properly organized. Similarly, distribution of local currency for needy cases would be most helpful. Much of the activity can be coordinated through a temporary committee designated by Minister of Interior on May 13 for management of Jewish problems, called Committee of the Union of Hungarian Jews. Is presided over by Samu Stern, Chairman of the Jewish community in Budapest, and Peto Erno as Vice President, Committee members are Karoly Wilhelm, Bela Berend (Chief Rabbi), Rabbi Samu Kahan Frankl, Fulop Obudai Freudip Guer (?) (Freudiger) (President of the local Jewish community), Sandor Torek (author), Dr. Jose F. Hagy (head physician of the Jewish Hospital) and Dr. Janos Gabor (attorney).

JOHNSON

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DOCUMENT
LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

175

No. 3593

Stockholm, June 26, 1944.

Subject: Transmitting Translation of Swedish Report on Anti-Jewish Measures Placed in Effect by Present "Government" of Hungary.

[REDACTED]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

With reference to my telegram to the Department No. 2271 June 23, 4 p.m., I have the honor to transmit a translation of a memorandum dated May 26, 1944, describing regulations which the present "Government" of Hungary has placed in effect for the purpose of restricting and abolishing the rights of the Jewish population.

The memorandum has only been made available to the Legation on the understanding that the interested American authorities will regard as confidential the fact that the information contained therein emanates from Swedish sources.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)
HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON

Herschel V. Johnson

Enclosure:
Translation of Memorandum
File No. 840.1
HFCJr:VE
Original to the Department for
possible ozaliding.

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000432

Enclosure to Despatch No. 3593 dated June 26, 1944, from the Legation at Stockholm, Sweden.

TRANSLATION

MEMORANDUM

During the past weeks new regulations have been issued daily in Budapest, designed to exclude the Jewish population from practically all the natural rights of a member of the community.

Among these regulations, practically all of which originated within the overworked Ministry of the Interior and are, therefore, often difficult to interpret and in many cases contradictory, three different categories may be discerned: Those applying to (A) professions and occupations; (B) housing and financial status and (C) living conditions in all other respects. The following may be an adequate summary, therefore, of what is now, or will in the near future be, denied a Jewish citizen in Hungary and the restrictions to which he is subject.

(A) No Jew may hold a position in the public service. Nor may a Jew practice a profession, i.e. as lawyer, journalist, author, publisher, printer, actor, owner of apothecary, lending library, advertising and newspaper office, copying agency, et cetera. A Jew is forbidden to carry on industry or trade as an independent enterprise and one-half of all Jews in private employment occupied with intellectual work must be dismissed by the enterprise in question before the end of May and the other half before the end of September of this year. Licenses granted Jews for production and sale of monopoly articles such as tobacco, liquor and salt have been declared invalid. Jews may not be employed as servants in homes and families, nor may a Jew employ a non-Jew to assist in the household. All such employment has been cancelled with one stroke of the pen, and thus the only occupations still open to Jews for their livelihood seem now to be those of physician, craftsman or manual laborer.

(B) The housing conditions have been "regulated" in such a way that all Jews are obliged to report their possession of living quarters and be prepared, with a few hours' or at the most some days' notice, to be evicted and forcibly removed, with orders to leave behind them certain designated types of furniture, etc. In reality this means that, bag in hand, they must move to some designated room to live with another Jewish family which has been regarded as having too much space. In other cases--and this concerns especially communities with less than 10,000 inhabitants--they have been forced to leave their community and, taking with them belongings not weighing more than 50 kilograms, and funds not exceeding 50 pengos, are forcibly transported to some other locality where a ghetto has been established, or if none exists, to an assembly camp having a minimum of space and abominable sanitary conditions. With respect to the capital with its some 300,000 Jewish inhabitants, there has, naturally, not yet been time

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to "solve" the problem along these lines. The idea of establishing a large enclosed ghetto has had to be abandoned, and it has been impossible to establish internment camps, with the exception of a small number under German management. According to reports, however, it is expected that three or four very stingily allotted sections of that quarter of Pest east of the Danube where the population already to a great extent is of Jewish race will for the time being be used as an unenclosed ghetto to which all the Jews living in other quarters of the town will be removed. Gentiles living in the aforementioned areas will be requested to move voluntarily to the vacated Jewish dwellings in other parts of the town. In case they offer objections--which, however, is unlikely--they, too, will be removed by force.

With regard to property, all Jews are obliged to declare their real estate and personal property, provided its value exceeds 10,000 pengo with an addition of 3,000 pengo for each member of the family. As a basis for evaluation, the "market value" is used, which under present conditions obviously is a very elastic concept and places the honest declarer in an unfavorable special category. All funds in excess of 3,000 pengo, gold or platinum articles, jewelry and precious stones must be handed over and deposited in a bank,--a stipulation, naturally, that is being evaded by the less conscientious even at the risk of detection and punishment. Shopkeepers must declare their stocks of goods on hand and equipment, which are sequestered as a result of the closing of the premises. This, obviously, caused much inconvenience in the case of shops carrying perishable foodstuffs; this situation had not been reckoned with, and it was thus necessary to make other arrangements.

(C) Jews must relinquish their ration cards and accept new ones on which the sugar ration is cut down from 1,000 to but 300 grams a month, and the butter ration is replaced by some 300 grams of sesame oil. Jews receive no veal or pork, merely 100 grams of beef or horse meat per week. These rules are likely to cause a further rise in the already flourishing black market.

Jews may not, without special permission which is very difficult to obtain, use railway, steamship or bus communications, and, in general, may not travel by automobile.

Jews may not frequent public baths with the exception of a few designated places intended exclusively for Jews. In Budapest there are now only three of the most unpretentious kind.

With respect to Jews living in the provinces, in so far as they still enjoy any freedom of movement, the local authorities have issued or will issue regulations regarding a certain limited time when they may leave their dwellings and make their purchases.

Jews may not live in hotels, frequent restaurants, cafes and tea shops, attend theatrical and musical performances or other public amusements, unless the local authorities have designated places and hours especially reserved for Jewish visitors.

Jews may not possess weapons or explosives and, finally, may not belong to any society or union of any kind, with the exception of the general association of all Jews in the country which it is planned to form and in which membership will be obligatory.

All the regulations mentioned herein, which will undoubtedly be further amplified, concern all Jews coming within the category of those who are obliged under an earlier decree to carry the yellow star and are in accordance therewith to be "regarded as Jews", regardless of whether they are of Jewish or Christian confession. (In Budapest the Christian Jews number about 35% of the total number of Jews.) As for those few who enjoy the privilege of being regarded as non-Jewish a revision will be made concerning those whose exemption is based on patriotism manifested by them even at the risk of their own lives during the counter-revolution of 1919. To this end a committee has been appointed within the Ministry of the Interior, whose head, however, has the authority personally to make the final decision irrespective of what the attitude may be of the committee members in each particular case. As a result of pressure brought by the clergy, relief has also been granted to persons of Jewish race belonging to the Christian clergy, and also to the Jewish spouse in a marriage and Jewish widows who prior to March 22nd of this year became Christians, provided there are no children belonging to the Mosaic congregation.

Finally, a regulation of more real significance is that which grants relief from all obligations now imposed upon Jews to foreign citizens for whom their respective legations have issued certificates as to their citizenship and submitted them to the Alien Control Commission, under the presumption that a state of reciprocity prevails.

Of the above-mentioned stipulations--for which in most cases no implementing orders have as yet been issued and which therefore can be and are subject to very arbitrary interpretation, especially in the provinces where the local authorities appear to act as they please--it may perhaps be said that although they imply unprecedented interference with a citizen's normal rights as a member of the community, they, nevertheless, do not imply any direct and immediate threat to life. Such a threat does, however, in fact loom before the great mass of Jewish population in Hungary. According to reliable reports, Hungary has been able through an agreement with the German authorities to carry its point as to the right to retain some 150,000 male Jews of the military conscript ages of 21-50 years for assignment to military labor companies to perform necessary tasks in connection with the country's defense. The remaining Jews, totalling some 900,000 persons, are intended to be transferred to German territory. This transfer has begun, and takes place daily in sealed freight cars carrying 70 persons in each car, without sanitary provisions and with no more food than each person can carry with him. Hitherto, according to one version, about 100,000 persons, and according to another, some 20,000 persons, have been sent to Germany

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in this manner. The areas which have thus been depopulated of Jews are primarily the 8th and 9th army corps areas in the eastern and northeastern parts of the country where internment camps have been established for a total number of 120,000 to 150,000 persons, in areas covering as many square meters, in the seven towns of Marosvasarhely, Kolozsvár, Des, Munkacs, Ungvár, Satoraljaujhely and Kassa--and also, according to an unconfirmed report, in Bekescsaba. As a rule, brick barns without walls and having only a roof have been used for this purpose, but at Des an open space in the forest has been used, with no protection against rain and wind. When riots broke out in some places in connection with internment measures, it is said that some 100 persons were shot or seriously wounded. Conditions in these camps are said to defy all description. In one or two places cases of typhus caused the city physician and, according to reports, also the chief of the army corps to lodge an energetic protest--without result, as the local authorities were able to point to an order emanating from the Ministry of the Interior. A report from the town of Ujvidek in southern Hungary (a town of tragic repute following the massacre in the winter of 1942, whose military initiators escaped punishment by fleeing to Germany but have now returned to their former posts) states that 2,000 Jews have been deported, and at the time of transportation to the camps were deprived even of their insignificant sums of money and hand baggage.

In other parts of the country the oppression and acts of violence against the Jewish population have not yet reached their climax. Thus, in the large province of Pest-Pilis which surrounds the capital the authorities have been content to observe the instructions that all Jews from the various districts should be placed in ghettos, totalling about 30, and may not be sent to internment camps except upon orders from the Ministry of the Interior in each specific case. Nonetheless, even here it appears only to be a question of time before the Jews thus assembled will in their turn be sent westward or northward. The purpose of this "emigration" seems to be partly to supply Germany with labor, and partly, with respect to the aged and children, to use them as some kind of hostages or bombing protection by placing them near industrial establishments important to war production.

May 29, 1944

000436

DOCUMENT

176

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: Amlegation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: July 14, 1944
NUMBER: 4506

I called on Mr. Pilet-Golaz, as forecast in my 4324, July 6, and conveyed expression of appreciation as directed in your 2221, June 30 and the entire War Refugee problem was reviewed.

1. Stating that he had received from President Huber a copy of the latter's reply to my letter of May 22, my 3144 and 3147, Mr. Pilet felt that any approach to the Germans along the lines indicated in your 1498, April 29, would be resented and might jeopardize ICRC's present efforts to furnish relief to the persecuted in which he would continue to put forward every assistance possible.

2. In regard to the havens of refuge (my letter of June 16 mentioned in my 3955, June 2), Mr. Pilet recalled the Swiss policy as previously stated respecting acceptance of refugees who are continually arriving. Likewise, Mr. Pilet referred to his efforts which have so far been unsuccessful in obtaining permission for children to come to Switzerland from German occupied territory and Germany. I was informed by Mr. Pilet that the interested services of his government had now under consideration a proposal to the Hungarian Government to take five thousand children and expectant mothers. It was his expectation that suitable arrangements be made so that they would not remain in Switzerland permanently if the proposal was successful.

3. Mr. Pilet stated, in regard to reports of deportation of some 400,000 Jews from Hungary, that to know exactly what had happened to those poor people was difficult. So far 250,000 had been taken as indicated by his reports. It is known that those capable of working had been moved to labor camps but it is not known what happened to the others. In Hungary arrest of Jews was affected by Hungarian authorities who then turned them over to the Gestapo and it is claimed that to this outrageous action 80% of the Hungarians were opposed. In many instances Hungarians had been punished for endeavoring to assist and protect the Jews. It was stated by Mr. Pilet that he had been told there were in Hungary about 800,000 Jews.

4. The interest and concern of the government and people of Switzerland for the fate of the Jews in Hungary was stressed by Mr. Pilet and he gave me in strictest confidence the following information:

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(A) In close touch with interested Swiss Jewish organizations the Federal government is facilitating communications between organizations in Switzerland and Jewish organizations in Hungary and in this connection Mr. Saly Mayer's name was mentioned by him.

(B) Close contact is maintained with and assistance rendered to ICRC. A direct appeal has been transmitted by him from President Huber to Regent Horthy.

(C) Now under active consideration is a proposal to obtain permission for 5000 children and expectant mothers (see above).

(D) Instructions have been issued to the Swiss Minister in Budapest to leave the Hungarian Government in no doubt as to the attitude of the Swiss Government and Swiss people with regard to these persecutions and to make it clear to the Hungarian Government that undoubtedly the good relations and high regard which the Swiss Government and people had for Hungary would be adversely affected by continuance of this policy. In similar terms Mr. Pilet has spoken to the Hungarian Charge in Bern.

5. Although the Regent has "washed his hands" of all responsibility, I was told by Mr. Pilet that he professed to be opposed to the persecution of Jews. It is apparent that to be named as one of those responsible is feared by Horthy. I propose to ask the Swiss, unless you perceive some objection, to press the Hungarians for a reply to our note of June 13 and in doing so call their attention to warning to Leaders as well as functionaries and subordinates in the statement of March 24 issued by the President.

HARRISON

000438

DOCUMENT

177

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: June 16, 1944
NUMBER: 3843

Reference is made herewith to No. 37 from WRB, your cable of June 6, 1944 No. 1945.

1. A note requesting transmission of inquiry to Hungarian Government, as suggested, has been delivered to the Swiss Foreign Office. This note requests an indication of the intentions of Hungary as regards further treatment of Jews with special reference to forced deportations, discriminatory reductions of food rations or adoption of similar measures that amount to mass execution and reminding them of the grave view which the United States takes regarding persecution of Jews and other minorities and the United States' determination to punish those sharing the responsibility in accordance with the March '24 warning by the President.

The Foreign Office has accepted the note as presented and will transmit verbatim as annex to the note to the authorities of Hungary. It has been agreed by the Swiss to report the date of the delivery of the note.

2. It is recommended that the foregoing be given no publicity pending receipt of information of delivery of the note by the Swiss to the Hungarians and that no mention of Swiss intermediary be made should publicity then appear to be advisable.

3. Considering the extremely small number of radio receiving sets in Hungary, dropping pamphlets by plane would be the best method of achieving publicity in Hungary.

HARRISON

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work--either in country itself or abroad. In so doing Government and its functionaries did not fail consider laws of humanity and justice. If individual cases of injustice occurred, they were always due to sporadic actions of some subordinate organs, which in each case were made responsible.

Numerous Jews were placed at the disposal of German Government as workers, as was case for years for tens of thousands of workers of Hungarian nationality and Christian faith.

Treatment of Jews working in Hungary is similar to that accorded other workers in work camps (for example students, etc.).

With respect to food rationing, non-working Jews do not receive certain more or less luxury articles (such as rice, fowl, butter, poppy); concerning basic necessities however they are on same basis as rest of population.

It may be added in supplement that during recent weeks situation of Jews has been notably improved. Enclosed note gives details regarding these concessions. At the instance of some foreign organizations (International Red Cross, War Refugee Board), Hungarian Government has made it possible for Hungarian Jews to emigrate to neutral states, respectively, to Palestine.

2. Translation from French of enclosure to above follows:

Present status of action taken by Hungarian Government regarding Jews is following:

- I. 1. Deportation of Jews for work abroad temporarily suspended.
2. View proposals presented by Swedish Red Cross, by Swiss Legation acting behalf Palestine Immigration Commission as well as by War Refugee Board, Hungarian Government authorized emigration Jews Sweden, Switzerland, Palestine and other countries.
 - a) Jews who obtain from Swedish King Swedish nationality can emigrate Sweden in accordance with action of Swedish Red Cross. Jews who have relatives Sweden or who have commercial contact for certain time with that country can emigrate Sweden or Palestine. This category includes about 400 or 500 persons.
 - b) Several thousand Jews are authorized emigrate Palestine aided by Palestinian Immigration Commission through intermediary Swiss Legation Budapest. Persons indicated above can emigrate Palestine if bearers "certificat d'immigration" delivered by British authorities.

DOCUMENT

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LFG-92

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

Bern

DATED: August 5, 1944

REC'D: 11:15 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
5040, August 5, 6 p.m.

1. With reference to note verbale No. 257, June 26, 1944, concerning a communication regarding the inquiry of American Government with respect to treatment of Jews in Hungary, Royal Hungarian Foreign Ministry has the honor to inform the Swiss Legation of the following:

As in most European states, Jewish question has, particularly in recent decades, also become one of the greatest economic, social and political problems in Hungary. Jewish problem became especially difficult as Jewry, thanks to liberal organization of the state, had been able secure prominent position in economic, political and cultural life. Also in those large states where race problem was far less important--as for instance negro question in the United States--government was obliged to take corresponding measures for the protection of its own race. In consequence, various governments of Hungary were obliged to strive against excessive influence of this foreign race, as Hungarian Jewry constitutes far greater danger for Hungary than for instance negroes or Japanese for white population of United States. Jews not only possessed most important economic positions in Hungary, but thereby exerted very strong influence on national life of the country as a whole, which threatened degenerate foundations of the national character of the people.

Recognizing this danger, as in other European states, the Hungarian Governments of the time also undertook solution of Jewish question. Articles of law XV of 1938, IV of 1939 and XV of 1941 formed legal basis for measures which tended toward solution Jewish question.

Military events on eastern front and approach of Soviet army to Hungarian frontier made it necessary fully to mobilize all military, material, and moral forces of country for defense of nation's existence. This also meant elimination of everything that would undermine or diminish the country's resisting power. As defeatist propaganda and agitation of Jews--as in 1918--became more and more perceptible in this decisive phase of the war, and in order to prevent repetition of tragic events of 1918-19, Government was obliged to eliminate on increased scale influence of Jews. They were consequently separated from rest of population and put to more useful

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- c) On basis of proposals mentioned above from War Refugee Board, Hungarian Government authorized Intercross to arrange sending Jewish children under 10 years of age to Palestine. War Refugee Board will be authorized materially assist Jews interned Hungary.
- II. In addition concessions above mentioned, following mitigations accorded in treatment Jews:
- 1. Deportation baptized Jews for work abroad stopped.
 - 2. a) Administration behalf baptized Jews entrusted "Counsel for Baptized Jews" established July 6, 1944.
 - b) Jews baptized prior to August 1, 1941, remain in the country but their segregation from non-Jewish persons will be ordered.
 - c) They are obtaining all facilities in exercise of their religion.
 - 3. a) Facilities ordered for baptized Jews residing Budapest will be extended to baptized Jews outside of capital.
 - b) Revision of situation of baptized Jews sent to work in Germany foreseen.
 - 4. It will be decided as soon as possible who are to be considered as converted Jews and such action will affect not only Jews aged 16 to 60 but Jews all ages.
 - 5. Following exempted bear Jewish star:
 - a) Family members of ministers of Christian religion (parent, brothers and sisters, wives and children of protestant ministers).
 - b) Bearers ecclesiastical (papal) decorations.
 - c) Members of Order of Holy Sepulchre.
- III. 1. a) Discretionary right reserved for regent in exemption certain number of Jews. There will be exempted:
 - b) Jews living in marriage with persons of Christian origin.
 - c) Jews bearing certain war decorations (golden medal military bravery, etc.).
 - d) Jews of certain special merits.
 - e) Ministers of Christian religions.
- 2. Departures Jews for work abroad will take place under conditions accordance humanitarian laws and Hungarian Red Cross will have possibility exercise control.
 - 3. It will be permitted to send via Red Cross food parcels to persons interned concentration camps.

HARRISON

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DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WAR REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

179



COPY

OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JUN 29 1944

TO: Mr. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War
FROM: J. W. Pehle

In connection with my recent conversation with you, I am attaching a copy of a cable just received from our representative in Bern, Switzerland. I wish to direct your attention particularly to the paragraphs concerning the railway lines being used for the deportation of Jews from Hungary to Poland and the proposal of various agencies that vital sections of these lines be bombed.

(Signed)

J. W. PEHLE

Attachment:
/Omitted - Ed.
See Document 1737

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DOCUMENT

180

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WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
Washington, D. C.

4 July 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I refer to your letter of June 29, inclosing a cable from your representative in Bern, Switzerland, proposing that certain sections of railway lines between Hungary and Poland be bombed to interrupt the transportation of Jews from Hungary.

The War Department is of the opinion that the suggested air operation is impracticable. It could be executed only by the diversion of considerable air support essential to the success of our forces now engaged in decisive operations and would in any case be of such very doubtful efficacy that it would not amount to a practical project.

The War Department fully appreciates the humanitarian motives which prompted the suggested operation but for the reasons stated above the operation suggested does not appear justified.

Sincerely,

(Signed)
JOHN J. MCCLOY

John J. McCloy

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DOCUMENT

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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
Delegation to the
United States of America
1645 Connecticut Ave., Washington 9, D.C.

In replying refer to (S/A/k)
July 25, 1944

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

This Delegation has received a cable from the I.C.R.C., the text of which is embodied in enclosed note.

At the suggestion of Mr. George L. Warren, Advisor on Refugees and Displaced Persons, Department of State, I am pleased to send you a copy thereof.

Yours very truly,

(Signed)
ALFRED E. ZOLLINGER

Alfred E. Zollinger
Delegate of the I.C.R.C.

AEZ:pst
Enclosure

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Enclosure No. 1 to letter
of the International Committee
of the Red Cross dated July 25,
1944/7

Ref: S/4/k
July 25, 1944

25/7/44 Handed over personally to
Mr. Warren of State

NOTE

We have received today the following communication from
the I.C.R.C. in Geneva:

The Hungarian Government is willing to make possible the
emigration of certain categories of Jews and has advised the
I.C.R.C. of its readiness in this respect.

Very obviously from the viewpoint of maintaining the prin-
ciple of neutrality, which in effect is based on reciprocity, the
I.C.R.C. feels that the number of emigrant Jews to be admitted
to the United States should be substantially increased, and that
a corresponding number of Entry permits should be accorded.

It would, furthermore, be desirable if the United States
Government would make a public statement on this subject, indi-
cating the number of Entry permits accorded. The I.C.R.C. is
of the opinion that such a statement would impress the Hungarian
Government as the visible sign of a favourable reaction to their
decision to cease the persecution of the Jews also on this side.
Moreover, the possibility of an eventual withdrawal of the
concession granted would be made difficult by a public declara-
tion, as suggested above, which would at the same time also
forestall an attempt on the part of the countries of emigration
to throw the blame for an eventual failure on the countries of
immigration.

The I.C.R.C. would like to be informed whether the United
States Government would be willing to transmit and support this
proposal to the Governments of the South American Republics or
whether the I.C.R.C. should do so directly.

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The I.C.R.C. reserves the right to issue a communique concerning this proposal, which has simultaneously been submitted to the Government of Great Britain.

(Signed)
ALFRED E. ZOLLINGER

Alfred E. Zollinger
Delegate, I.C.R.C.

AEZ:pst
cc: Mr. Richard Allen

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DOCUMENT

182

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Embassy, London
DATED: July 28, 1944
NUMBER: 5948

[REDACTED]

From the Department and the War Refugee Board.

The substance of a message from Amlegation Bern is as follows:

QUOTE A note from the Foreign Office, dated yesterday, states that according to a telegram from the Swiss Legation at Budapest, authorization has been given by the Government of Hungary for the departure of all Jews from Hungary who hold entry permits for another country, including Palestine.

This same message states that transit through occupied territories will be permitted by the German Government. As soon as possible the Swiss Legation, in collaboration with the Palestinian Bureau, Budapest, will take necessary measures for evacuation. It is probable that Hungarian police passports will constitute travel documents. UNQUOTE

This Government is authorizing its consular officers in neutral countries to issue immigration visas to every person who had been in enemy-controlled areas since December 8, 1941, to whom an American immigration visa was issued or for whom such visa was authorized on or after July 1, 1941, the date when present regulation and security-checking system went into effect, provided such person is not affirmatively found to have become disqualified for a visa or to have been the subject of a subsequent adverse report. The issuance of such visas is, in the discretion of consular officers, not subject to the interdepartmental review procedure. Visas are to be issued, of course, only when such persons arrive in neutral countries. This Government is requesting the Swiss Government to advise the German, Hungarian, Rumanian, and Bulgarian Governments as well as such authorities as there may be in Slovakia of the substance of the foregoing and to request the release to neutral countries of persons holding American visas or for whom American visas were authorized on or after July 1, 1941. The Governments of Switzerland, Spain, Sweden, Portugal, and Turkey are being requested to permit the entry of such persons, upon the assurance that they will be adequately maintained and that arrangements will be made for the evacuation of all such persons admitted into their territories who may be found not (repeat not) to be qualified for the issuance of such visas. Such governments are also being requested to advise

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Germany and Germany's allies of their willingness to receive such persons.

The Turkish Government is also being requested to advise enemy governments of its willingness either to issue transit visas to all persons in enemy-controlled areas holding Palestine certificates or to admit such persons into Turkey in transit to Palestine without the formal issuance of visas.

In further response to message from Amlegation Bern, the substance of which is quoted above, this Government is prepared to advise the Hungarian and neutral governments that all Jews arriving in neutral countries from Hungary will be afforded havens in United Nations territory just as promptly as military considerations permit, neutral governments to be given adequate assurances as to the maintenance of such persons in the meantime and to be requested to advise the Hungarian Government of their willingness to receive such persons. Please endeavor to ascertain from the Foreign Office whether the Government of the United Kingdom will join this Government in this attempt to save lives. American missions in neutral countries are being instructed to take appropriate action along these lines in collaboration with their British colleagues if possible, alone if necessary. Since time is of the essence, British missions should be advised of Foreign Office views promptly.

Please keep Department and Board advised.

Please advise Sir Herbert Emerson of the Intergovernmental Committee of the foregoing and endeavor to ascertain from him some indication as to the extent to which IGC funds may be available for the maintenance of such refugees from Hungary as may arrive in neutral countries following such approaches. The War Refugee Board would appreciate as early a response to this inquiry as possible.

Under all of the circumstances it might prove tragic if the fullest advantage of the present opportunity were not (repeat not) taken. Consequently, you are requested urgently to propose to the Foreign Office the necessity of immediately making available to Jews in Hungary Palestine certificates in substantial additional numbers. In this connection, the possibility should not be overlooked that once the holders of such additional certificates arrive in Turkey or Spain, they may be routed to havens other than Palestine if circumstances should be deemed to preclude their entry into Palestine. Please advise the Department and Board of such views as the Foreign Office might express.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)

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DOCUMENT

183

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: AMLEGATION, BERN
DATE: August 2, 1944
NUMBER: 2657

[REDACTED]

With reference to offer of Hungarian Government to permit departure of Jews from Hungary (your 4604 July 19) you are advised that the British Embassy here presented on July 26 two cables from the British Foreign Office suggesting that the matter of surveying and coordinating possible places of refuge for the Jews from Hungary be referred to the Intergovernmental Committee. The cables also stated that the possibility of receiving refugees in Palestine were limited and would have to be reviewed and also that the capacities of the camps at Casablanca and Philipville in Algiers would need to be re-studied. The Department and the War Refugee Board on July 31 presented a memorandum for the British Embassy suggesting that the responsibility for dealing with the Hungarian offer rests on the British and United States Governments particularly and expressing the judgment that the Intergovernmental Committee cannot act in time to be effective because of the need of consulting other governments. Included in the memorandum to the British Embassy was the following draft of a proposed cable to Bern with the request that the British Government concur in its transmission to Bern by August 7, 1944, at the latest.

QUOTE Amlegation Bern. The following communication has been received by the Department from the delegate in the United States of the International Committee of the Red Cross. INNERQUOTE We have received today the following communication from ICRC in Geneva:

The Hungarian Government is willing to make possible the emigration of certain categories of Jews and has advised the ICRC of its readiness in this respect.

Very obviously from the viewpoint of maintaining the principle of neutrality, which in effect is based on reciprocity, the ICRC feels that the number of emigrant Jews to be admitted to the United States should be substantially increased, and that a corresponding number of entry permits should be accorded.

It would, furthermore, be desirable if the United States Government would make a public statement on this subject, indicating the number of entry permits accorded. The ICRC is of the opinion that such a statement would impress the Hungarian Government as the visible sign of

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a favorable reaction to their decision to cease the persecution of the Jews also on this side. Moreover, the possibility of an eventual withdrawal of the concession granted would be made difficult by a public declaration, as suggested above, which would at the same time also forestall an attempt on the part of the countries of emigration to throw the blame for an eventual failure on the countries of immigration.

The ICRC would like to be informed whether the United States Government would be willing to transmit and support this proposal to the Governments of the South American Republics or whether the ICRC should do so directly.

The ICRC reserves the right to issue a communique concerning this proposal, which has simultaneously been submitted to the Government of Great Britain. END INNERQUOTE.

You should at once request the International Committee of the Red Cross to advise the Hungarian Government as follows:

INNERQUOTE The United States Government has learned through the ICRC of the Hungarian Government's willingness to permit the emigration from Hungary of certain categories of Jews. This Government, despite the substantial difficulties and responsibilities involved, has consistently made clear its determination to take all practicable steps to rescue victims of religious or political oppression. In view of the overwhelming humanitarian considerations involved concerning the Jews in Hungary, this Government now repeats specifically its assurance that it will arrange for the care of all Jews permitted to leave Hungary in the present circumstances who reach neutral or United Nation's territory, and will find for such people temporary havens of refuge where they may live in safety. These assurances have been communicated to the governments of neutral countries who have been requested to permit the entry of Jews who reach their borders from Hungary. This Government now awaits information concerning the concrete steps to be taken by the Hungarian Government to carry out its proposal. END INNERQUOTE.

The above-mentioned proposal has also been addressed to the British Government which is taking parallel action. Accordingly, you may wish to join with your British colleague in conveying to the International Committee of the Red Cross this expression of joint action.

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You should indicate to the International Committee of the Red Cross the opinion of this Government that in view of the above assurances it is considered unnecessary to consult the governments of the South American Republics at this time.

It is urgent that the International Committee of the Red Cross convey the foregoing representations to the Government of Hungary without delay. The cooperation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in this matter is appreciated.

Please advise promptly of the results of the action taken by you. UNQUOTE.

In order to prevent any possible misunderstanding, it is repeated that the foregoing draft cable to Bern is now before the British Government for clearance and concurrence and is sent to you solely for your information and understanding at this time. Until you are specifically requested to do so, you are not (repeat not) to take the action suggested in the cable. However, in the meantime you are authorized to advise the ICRC informally that the British and United States Governments are in consultation on the matter and that a reply will be forthcoming shortly to the ICRC note.

Repeated to London, as 6096, referring to Embassy's 5956 July 27.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)

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DOCUMENT

184

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington.
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 7, 1944.
NUMBER: 2715

The following message has been repeated, only for information, to London, dated August 7, Number 6234.

Please refer to message dated August 2, Number 2657, from the Department, which was repeated as Number 6096 to London.

You are directed, lacking other instructions which in the meantime may be sent you, to send on August 11 to Intercross the text of the reply which was transmitted to you for your information in message from the Department, Number 2657.

Immediately upon receipt of this message you should notify Intercross that on the 11th of August you will deliver a response to this communication regarding the so-called Horthy offer.

Being considered by the British Government at the present time is the matter of the reply of the British Government, to be made to Intercross. Deference to the British Government, which requested a postponement for three or four days, caused the delay in delivering the reply of this Government from the 7th to the 11th of August. It is hoped by this Government that before the 11th of August your British associate will have received from London instructions that are similar, but in any case the delivery of the reply of this Government is not to be postponed beyond the 11th of August.

It is the intention here to make public the message from Intercross, and the reply of this Government to that message, as soon as the reply of this Government, referred to in preceding paragraphs, has been delivered by you. This intention has not been communicated to the British Government.

STETTINIUS

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DOCUMENT

185

MMC
Distribution of
true reading only
by special arrangement.

To be sent in Secret "W"
July 28, 1944
10 p.m.

(S) (W)

War Refugee Board

Amlegation
Stockholm
1501

The following from Department and Board is War Refugee Board cable 58.

1. There follows the substance of a message received from Amlegation Bern:

QUOTE. A note from the Foreign Office, dated yesterday states that according to a telegram from the Swiss Legation at Budapest, authorization has been given by the Government of Hungary for the departure of all Jews from Hungary who hold entry permits for another country, including Palestine.

This same message states that transit through occupied territories will be permitted by the German Government. As soon as possible the Swiss Legation, in collaboration with the Palestinian Bureau, Budapest, will take necessary measures for evacuation. It is probably that Hungarian police passports will constitute travel documents. UNQUOTE

2. There are a number of persons in enemy controlled areas to whom American Visas were issued on and after July 1, 1941, the date when present existing procedures and security checks became effective, who, by reason of transportation difficulties and the advent of war, were unable to make effective use of such visas. It is believed that a large proportion of such persons are among those groups subject to enemy persecution. In the belief that the availability of new American visas for such persons may save their lives, the Swiss Government is being requested to advise enemy governments that American consular officers in neutral countries have been authorized to issue an immigration visa to any person to whom an American immigration visa was issued or for whom a visa was authorized on or after July 1, 1941 and who has been in areas controlled by Germany or any of Germany's allies since December 8, 1941, provided that such person presents

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himself to an American consular officer in a neutral country and is found not to have become disqualified for the issuance of a visa.

Accordingly, American consular officers in Sweden are hereby authorized to issue new American immigration visas to any such person to whom an American visa was issued or for whom such visa was authorized after July 1, 1941, provided that (a) such person other than a child under 16 years of age is found upon telegraphic reference to the Department for security check not to be the subject of an adverse report dated subsequent to the previous approval, (b) such person is not affirmatively found by the consul to be inadmissible into the United States under the law, or (c) the consul does not consider that the case is one which should be recommended for consideration under the committee procedure.

Please advise appropriate Swedish officials of the foregoing authorization and attempt to secure their prompt agreement to advise enemy governments of Sweden's willingness to permit the entry into Sweden, with or without transit visas, of all persons to whom American immigration visas were issued on or subsequent to July 1, 1941. You may assure such officials that any such persons so admitted will be adequately maintained and that any who may be found not (repeat not) to be qualified for the issuance of a visa will be evacuated as promptly as possible. Detailed instructions in connection with the issuance of new American immigration visas pursuant to the foregoing authority will follow promptly. The same request is being made of Switzerland, Turkey, Spain, and Portugal, and Sweden.

3. There follows the substance of the pertinent portion of a message to Amembassy London:

QUOTE In further response to message from Amlegation Bern, the substance of which is quoted above, this Government is prepared to advise the Hungarian and neutral governments that all Jews arriving in neutral countries from Hungary will be afforded havens in United Nations territory just as promptly as military considerations permit, neutral governments to be given adequate assurances as to the maintenance of such persons in the meantime and to be requested to advise the Hungarian Government of their willingness to receive such persons. Please endeavor to ascertain from the Foreign Office whether the Government of the United Kingdom will join this Government in this attempt to save lives. American missions in neutral countries are being

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instructed to take appropriate action along these lines in collaboration with their British colleagues if possible, alone if necessary. Since time is of the essence, British missions should be advised of Foreign Office views promptly. UNQUOTE.

Accordingly, you are requested to consult with your British colleague and either in collaboration with him or alone, as the circumstances may develop, approach appropriate officials of the Swedish Government with the request that Sweden advise the Hungarian Government that it is prepared to receive Jews released by Hungary and permitted to go to Sweden. You may assure appropriate Swedish officials that if Sweden so advises the Hungarian Government, Jews arriving in Sweden from Hungary will be evacuated to United Nations territory as promptly as possible and that in the meantime the United States will undertake to make arrangements for their maintenance and support in Sweden. You should inform the Department and the Board promptly of the results of your consultation with your British colleague and your approach to the Swedish Government.

4. Please keep Department and Board currently advised of all developments and any difficulties you may encounter.

STETTINIUS
(Acting)
(GLW)

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DOCUMENT

186

Secretary of State,
Washington
US Urgent
6609, Sixteenth.

Plain
London
Dated August 16, 1944
Rec'd 2:45 p.m.

[REDACTED] for the War Refugee Board from Dubois.

The following is the exact text of the joint declaration agreed upon by the British Government.

Intercross has communicated to the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States an offer of the Hungarian Government regarding the emigration and treatment of Jews. Because of the desperate plight of the Jews in Hungary and the overwhelming humanitarian considerations involved the two governments are informing the Government of Hungary through Intercross that, despite the heavy difficulties and responsibilities involved, they have accepted the offer of the Hungarian Government for the release of Jews and will make arrangements for the care of such Jews leaving Hungary who reach neutral or United Nations territory, and also that they will find temporary havens or refuge where such people may live in safety. Notification of these assurances is being given to the governments of neutral countries who are being requested to permit the entry of Jews who reach their frontiers from Hungary. The Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States emphasize that, in accepting the offer which has been made, they do not in any way condone the action of the Hungarian Government in forcing the emigration of Jews as an alternative to persecution and death.

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 21, 1944
NUMBER: 2877

For McClelland:

Refer paragraph marked 4, Department's 2605 of July 28, WRB's 94.

The authorization given to consular officers in Switzerland by the Department's 891 of March 18 and Department's 2236 of July 3 is hereby amended to include authorization to issue such visas to refugee children arriving in Switzerland from Hungary. For issuance through October, the additional nonpreference quota immigration numbers given below were allotted to Zurich: Hungarian, 72 to 176 inclusive.

Please advise appropriate Swiss officials and make all appropriate efforts to arrange for the release to Switzerland from Hungary of children who may be eligible for the issuance of such visas.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 122.

HULL

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DOCUMENT

188

HIS
This telegram must be
paraphrased before being
communicated to anyone
other than a Government
agency. ~~(REPEAT NOT)~~

August 12, 1944
8 p.m.

AMLEGATION,
CANBERRA (AUSTRALIA)

Circular

Reference previous communications regarding refugee children.

In view of the situation in Hungary and the recent statement by Admiral Horthy that his Government would grant exit permits to, and suspend deportations of, all Jewish children for whom havens may be provided outside Hungary, would you request the government to which you are accredited to extend its acceptance in principle to children from Hungary as well as from France.

You may assure appropriate officials of that government that no detailed plans have as yet been developed for the actual immigration of refugee children into its country. Should such plans become necessary at a later date, they will not (repeat not) be developed without previous consultation with the government to which you are accredited.

STETTINIUS
ACTING

[Repeated to Ottawa, Ciudad Trujillo, Dublin, San Salvador,
Guatemala, Tegucigalpa, Managua, Asuncion, and Lima.]

000459

DOCUMENT

189

MAE-695

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

Dublin
Dated August 15, 1944
Rec'd 9:30 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
131, August 15, 1 a.m.

Reference is made to Department's circular telegram August 12, 8 p.m. concerning refugee children.

Irish Government in principle extends its offer of refuge to children from Hungary as well as from France.

GRAY

000460

DOCUMENT

190

COPY

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Ciudad Trujillo, D.R., September 5, 1944

NO. 294

Subject: Reply of Dominican Government to Proposal
to Accept Refugee Children

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular telegram of August 12, 1944, 8 p.m. and to previous correspondence regarding orphaned or abandoned children and to my airgram No. A-401 of August 21, 1944, 10:30 a.m. stating that the Dominican Foreign Minister had informed the Embassy that the Dominican Government had no objection in principle to including refugee children from Hungary as well as from France. I am enclosing a translation of a note of August 31, 1944, from the Foreign Minister, Lic. M. A. Pena Batlle confirming his oral communication of August 18, 1944, stating that the Dominican Government would also accept children from Hungary.

Respectfully yours,
For the Ambassador

Andrew E. Donovan, II
Second Secretary of Embassy

Enclosure:
Note of August 31, 1944

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Enclosure No. 1 to accompany despatch No. 294 of September 5, 1944,
from the American Embassy, Ciudad Trujillo, D. R.

Mr. Ambassador:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your attentive note No. 89 dated August 14 of the present year regarding the efforts to care for orphan children abandoned in Europe by which Your Excellency informed my chancellery that the Department of State had informed you that in view of the situation in Hungary and the recent declaration of Admiral Horthy that his government would suspend the deportation of and grant exit permits to all Jewish children offered asylum outside Hungary and would appreciate it if you could be advised if the Dominican Government would desire to extend its offer in principle to children from Hungary as well as to the children from France.

Your Excellency adds in the note referred to that detailed plans on the immigration of refugee children to the Dominican Republic have not yet been developed and that in the event it should later be necessary to develop such plans it would not be done without previously consulting my government.

I am honored to inform Your Excellency that as the Dominican Government did not make a distinction in the nationality of the children which it would receive there is not inconvenience that they should also proceed from Hungary.

I take this opportunity to reiterate to Your Excellency assurance of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

M. Pena Batlle

000462

DOCUMENT

191

FBM-736

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

Tegucigalpa
DATED: August 15, 1944
REC'D 5:12 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
257, August 15, Noon.

Answer to Department's circular telegram of August 12, 8 p.m. is that Honduras consents.

ERWIN

EMB
Refugee Children

000463

DOCUMENT

192

HIS - 706

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

Managua

DATED: August 28, 1944

REC'D: 7:58 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington
538, August 28, 4 p.m.

Foreign Office in note dated August 25, 1944, states that it has no objection to the 100 visas authorized for refugee children (see my 271, May 5, 4 p.m.) being issued to either Hungarian or French children. Reference Department's circular telegram of August 12, 8 p.m.

STEWART

000464

DOCUMENT

193

GEK-171

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

Asuncion
DATED: September 5, 1944
REC'D: 7:35 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
503, September 5, 3 p.m.

Paraguayan Government is willing to extend its acceptance in principle and with the same conditions to children from Hungary (reference Department's circular telegram August 12, 8 p.m.) but suggests the convenience of leaving an interval after the shipment of French children in order to ascertain what additional number can usefully be accepted.

BEAULAC

000465

DOCUMENT

194

GEK-241

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

Quito

DATED September 15, 1944
REC'D 1:39 p.m.

Secretary of State.,
Washington.
908, September 15, 10 a.m.

Ecuadoran Government has indicated it would be able to accept approximately 300 children (reference Department's telegram No. 680 and Embassy's despatch No. 2053 of August 10 and August 29, respectively). Text of communication received from the Foreign Office is being sent by airmail pouch.

SCOTTEN

000466

DOCUMENT

195

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Embassy, London
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: September 8, 1944
NUMBER: 7393


The Embassy has been advised by the Director of IGC that the Brazilian Ambassador in London has informed him that Brazil is ready to accept 500 Jewish refugee children from Hungary who may be allowed to leave Hungary. However, the Government of Brazil does not desire to assume any financial responsibility concerning upkeep or transport.

The War Refugee Board should be informed.

WIMANT

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 23, 1944
NUMBER: 2900

[REDACTED]

Cable to McClelland:

Reference is made to your 4604 of July 19 and 5040 of August 5.

1. In addition to taking action requested in Department's 2715 of August 7, please express to the Foreign Office the appreciation of this Government for the information contained in your 4604 and 5040. In order that the Swiss Government may be fully advised as to the attitude of this Government on this subject, you may make available to appropriate officials of the Foreign Office the text of the reply given by this Government on August 11 to Intercross in accordance with Department's 2657 of August 2 and 2715 of August 7.

Please request the Swiss Foreign Office to inform Hungarian authorities that although this Government has taken note of the communication reported in your 5040, it does not accept the reasoning therein contained and reserves the right to return at a later date to the purported facts therein related. Hungarian authorities should further be informed that the limited assurances contained in each communication serve only to prompt a reiteration of this Government's warning that all those who share in the responsibility for the persecution of Jews and other minorities will be brought to justice. Hungarian authorities should also be informed that it is the Government's strong view that the deportation of any category of Jews comes within the foregoing and that permission freely to emigrate and Red Cross supervision of treatment and living conditions must as a minimum be extended to all categories of Jews.

2. A wide discrepancy is noted to exist between various communications and reports regarding Hungarian Government's offer relating to treatment of Jews. For obvious reasons, this Government bases its position on version communicated through Swiss Foreign Office and contained in your 4604, and proposes to continue to do so. Nevertheless, it is anxious to ascertain the precise nature of the Hungarian offer and attitude. Please, therefore, without departing from the above stated position of this Government, make discreet and informal inquiries from such sources as are available to you concerning following principal uncertainties:

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Have deportations been definitely stopped for all categories or only suspended, and if so, for how long and for what categories?

To what extent will Jews in Hungary be permitted and in fact enabled to procure food and other necessities through ordinary, commercial channels and aside from Intercross action?

To what extent is it possible to expect that stoppage of deportations and other forms of actual danger to life would continue even in the absence of actual sizeable emigration of Jews from Hungary during hostilities?

To what extent is emigration to countries other than Palestine permitted to Jews over ten years of age?

Could emigration be conducted in such a way as to prevent breaking up of families, with children under ten separated from parents?

To what extent, in view of internal situation in Hungary, is it possible to count on Hungarian promises being made effective and continuing up to the termination of hostilities?

Please advise Department and Board as soon as possible of answers to any of above questions.

3. In the light of military and political situation, it appears here that main emphasis should be placed now on inducing appropriate Hungarian circles to maintain and strengthen the newly reported relaxation of Jewish regime in Hungary and to apply such relaxation to all categories of Jews in Hungary. Preventing deportations and assuring tolerable living conditions for all Jews in Hungary, if feasible, seems more important than assistance in clandestine escape of individuals and groups. Please advise of any information and developments on this point.

4. With reference to 230 from Amembassy London to you, the broad program envisaged above and in Department's 2657 might be jeopardized by limited scope of approach suggested by said 230 from London. Therefore, it is not (repeat not) thought advisable that you limit any of your demarches to children under ten and the supply problem which are the only items dealt with in 230 from London. But you are authorized, of course, to give the assurance concerning availability of supplies for Hungarian refugees through blockade in line with 230 from London.

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- 793 -

Repeated to Amembassy London as No. 6725 with this opening sentence: For your information, cable of August 23, No. 2900, to Bern, repeated below.

This is WRB Bern Cable No. 129

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197

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: September 30, 1944
NUMBER: 6524

Reference is made in the following to the Department's September 21 telegram No. 3255.

The Legation wishes to report in connection with second paragraph of message referred to above that, in accordance with instructions of the Department, it communicated to Inter-cross by letter the substance of numbered paragraphs one and two of the Department's August 19 cable No. 2853, numbered paragraph three thereof to Swiss Foreign Office for communication to the authorities of Hungary. The reply which Inter-cross made to Legation's letter is summarized in Legation's September 3 cable No. 5796. According to Swiss note dated September 26 the Swiss Budapest Legation communicated to the Hungarian Government the substance of numbered paragraph 3 of Department's telegram No. 2853, on the 6th of September. On the same date Hungarian Government was also advised by said Legation of substance of paragraph two under numbered section one of August 23 cable No. 2900 from the Department.

The Wilner Case mentioned in last paragraph of Department's cable under reference, which was also the subject of Department's September 2 cable No. 3038, is being taken up with Swiss authorities again by Legation. If cases involving individuals who claim U. S. nationality were made the subject of separate instructions from the Department it would be most helpful to us.

HARRISON

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 19, 1944
NUMBER: 2853

Following for McClelland:

1. Reference is made to your 5040 of August 5 section 3 near end.

The following is the substance of similar information contained in note of Hungarian Legation, Stockholm, to Swedish Foreign Office: QUOTE It was further ordered that future deportees for labor service will have right of supervision by Hungarian Red Cross representatives in order to avoid further charges of brutality. UNQUOTE

2. In view of issue involved, i.e., possible extermination of 400,000 Jews already said to have been deported, please suggest to Intercross the urgency of contacting Hungarian authorities and Hungarian Red Cross with a view to establishing immediate supervision of Red Cross over all camps to which Jews from Hungary have been deported in the past as well.

3. Please request Swiss Foreign Office to transmit to appropriate Hungarian officials a message in the following vein: QUOTE With further reference to Hungarian communication (referred to in your 5040 of August 5), the Government of the United States notes the explanation contained in said communication regarding Jews deported from Hungary to the effect that they have been INNERQUOTE placed at disposal of German Government as workers as was case for years for tens of thousands of workers of Hungarian nationality and Christian faith. END OF INNERQUOTE

In view of the policy of the German Government with regard to Jews, which the U. S. Government assumes is well-known to Hungarian Government, the Government of the United States would appreciate a statement of such measures which have been taken and are being taken by Hungarian authorities to insure humane treatment of Jews placed at Germany's disposal and to safeguard them against starvation and other forms of persecution.

The Hungarian authorities will readily perceive that unless such measures are taken with respect to all Jews INNERQUOTE placed at disposal of German Government END OF INNERQUOTE the explanation offered would appear to be at utter variance with the

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facts and any cases of abuse will be imputed to those Hungarian authorities responsible for placing such Jews at Germany's disposal.

Prompt response to the inquiry herein made is being awaited by the Government of the United States with extraordinary interest. UNQUOTE You may, of course, in transmitting the foregoing to Swiss Foreign Office adjust language in your discretion.

This is WEB Cable to Bern No. 130.

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199

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern.
TO: Secretary of State, Washington.
DATED: September 3, 1944.
NUMBER: 5796

Reference is made herewith to your cable of August 19, No. 2853, WRB's 130.

It is stated in Intercross response of August 31 that the Committee is continuing to oppose the deportation of Jews from Hungary by every means in their power.

Their wish to refrain from any share in the deportations, if only to obtain more tolerable means of transportation, is indicated by the desire that their attitude shall not be interpreted to mean participation in or approval of deportations.

A fresh proposal has just been submitted by the Committee to the Hungarian Government and Jewish Senate Budapest in an effort to find means of extending the Committee's protection to Jews confined in camps or houses in Hungary. We will communicate the result promptly.

HARRISON

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: Amlegation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: October 18, 1944
NUMBER: 6913

[REDACTED]

There is transmitted in Swiss note of October 13 a copy of a note dated September 26 addressed to the Swiss Legation for the Hungarian Foreign Office which contains a summary translation of the reply given below to the following:

A. Department's 2853, dated August 19, paragraph three.

A workers Supervisory Office has been established by the Hungarian Legation at Berlin to take care of Hungarian Nationals who as workers were placed at the disposal of the Government of Germany. To every male and female worker of Hungarian nationality, regardless of religion or race the competence of this office extends.

In addition, Dr. Robert Schirmer, permanent delegate of the International Red Cross at Berlin, was, pursuant to his request during his visit to Budapest in early August, informed that International Red Cross relief and humanitarian activities for those Jews placed as workers at the disposal of the Government of Germany was also authorized by Government of Hungary.

The proposal to the Government of Germany that a representative of the International Red Cross be allowed to visit Hungarian Jews working in Germany was made by the Government of Hungary itself.

B. Department's 2900, August 23, paragraph two, point one.

It was ordered as soon as August 1944 that the transfer of Jews of Jewish faith for labor service abroad must definitely cease and no Jews have been put at the disposal of the German Government since that time.

The Government of Hungary is ready to give authorization to emigrate to all categories of Jews. During Dr. Schirmer's above mentioned visit he was so advised of this.

Consent has been given by the Government of Hungary for the International Red Cross organs to observe treatment of Jews and their living conditions. During the last of July and the beginning of August of 1944, Dr. Schirmer has exercised this control and since then the International Red Cross delegate at Budapest, Dr. Friedrichborn has done so.

HARRISON

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: AMERICAN LEGATION, STOCKHOLM
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: August 23, 1944
NUMBER: 3242

An official of Sweden, who is thought identical with informant of Count Bernadette mentioned in my message number 3166 of the sixteenth of August, has given the Legation additional detail with regard to the location near Budapest where he witnessed Jews herded for deportation into boxcars.

The location was Budakalasz in an old brick yard. By the ruthless demeanor of Hungarian gendarmes the informant was particularly impressed. They were described by him as bloodthirsty as the Gestapo of Germany. Jews, old, young and children, male and female, were herded into boxcars by gendarmes who drove them on with rifle butts and a whip was even used by one gendarme.

From Jewish girls of Hungary now in Hamburg and other places soldiers of Germany have brought back messages to Budapest to their friends. After having been deported from Hungary these girls have been turned over to German armed forces and wear armbands inscribed war harlot ("Kriegshure").

In provincial Hungary, camps of Jews were emptied before a halt was made to deportations by officials of Hungary. As a rule while the camps were still operating they were managed by Hungarian personnel aided by an SS advisor thought competent in giving instructions in competent managing of Jews to the Hungarians.

JOHNSON

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: August 25, 1944
NUMBER: 2933

This is the substance of information received by this Government from a thoroughly reliable eye-witness:

QUOTE Approximately 20,000 Hungarian Jews, children, men and women, had been concentrated in the open air for 4 or 5 days with nothing even to sit on except the ground. They had been herded into boxcars 80 persons per car, the car then nailed up and sent off to foreign destinations. The people are packed in the cars like sardines with no possibility of sitting or even moving. Many must have been dead on arrival. The people handling this affair were not Germans but Hungarian Gendarmes. UNQUOTE

This report bears out others coming to this Government from different sources that in the main the Hungarian Police have themselves been the instrument for arresting and deporting Jews from Hungary under conditions which are tragically cruel.

Please convey this information to Swiss Government for transmission to Hungarian authorities. These authorities are to be informed that their comment regarding these reports, which this Government regards as authentic, is awaited with interest.

For your confidential information, above reports reached Department from Amlegation Stockholm.

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATE: October 3, 1944
NUMBER: 3404

To Minister Harrison and McClelland.

Reference is made to your 6445 of September 28.

You may state that our information contained in Department's 2933 of August 25 was received from a person connected with a neutral legation in Budapest. The place of the specific instance cited was an old brick yard in Budakalasz. The time of the occurrence is unknown, but seems rather immaterial, since the Hungarian Government denied that Hungarian officials ever participated in cruelties in connection with the deportations.

For your confidential information, the legation concerned is that of Sweden, and the incident was related to Oisen by Count Bernadotte, Chairman of Swedish Red Cross.

This is WRB Bern cable No. 197.

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: Amlegation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: October 24, 1944
NUMBER: 7048

Legation's 6948, October 10, 1944.

It is reported by Swiss that delivery of notification was made to Hungarian Foreign Office the eleventh of October.

HARRISON

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DSH-507

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government Agency. (S-0)

Bern

Dated October 5, 1944

Rec'd 2:10 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

6619, October 5, 6 a.m.

FOR WEB FROM MCCLELLAID:

I have received a number of reports lately dealing with most recent developments in situation of Jews in Slovakia and Hungary of which I consider following pertinent details would interest you.

Report from Bratislava dated September 27 states that due to cooperation of various Jewish youth groups with Partisan Gestapo has instigated general concentration of all Jews in provinces. They are being mainly assembled at camp of Sered which was taken earlier in month by Partisans. About 500 Jews were liberated (but later recaptured by Germans.) Germans are also said to be concentrating Jews at Trencsin. About 1700 Jewish internees from camp at Novaky were recently liberated by Partisans who still control this region. All Jews capable of bearing arms from Novaky have been enrolled in resistance units.

According to report from Czech resistance operating in Slovakia dated September 19 Tito declared he had received "assurances" from Germans that Jews in provinces were simply being concentrated but would "not be removed from Slovak territory". This can scarcely be relied upon and telegram from responsible Jewish circles in Bratislava dated October 3 indicates that deportations from provinces (scale unknown) are already taking place.

Situation in Bratislava itself while tense appears quiet as far as deportations are concerned and central Jewish office under direction Mrs. Fleischmann continues to function. Rescue activity now consists mainly in procuring false "Aryan" papers for and in hiding Jews. There is a certain volume of flight back to Hungary.

I sent a further sum of 100,000 Swiss francs from WRB funds to support all such practical rescue activities with Coujler who left October 4 for Bratislava and Budapest.

During his most recent interview with Kasztner, Biolitz and a new Gestapo Agent at Swiss German frontier on September 29 Saly Mayer elicited unwilling assurances from German that no deportations from Slovakia would take place as long as "negotiations"

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continued. This seems to have been successful to date in any event as far as Jews in Bratislava are concerned.

Status of Mayer's negotiations with Germans remains very much as reported in Legation's 6110, September 16. Claiming that he did not have necessary technical qualifications for compiling list of goods Germans desired in Switzerland, Mayer again invited them to send representatives for this purpose here. It is however still most doubtful that Swiss authorities will grant such visas, as presence Gestapo men Switzerland is highly distasteful to them. I have discussed matter informally with Swiss and Mayer is taking it up once more this week. By bluffing it has happily been possible to draw matters out another time although whole affair is becoming very strained.

During the recent interview Kasztner reported that as yet no movement of Jews out of Budapest (Legation's 6447, September 28) had begun. However notorious SS "Obersturmbann Fuehrer" Eichmann formerly of Lubic who along with his henchman "Hauptsturmbann Fuehrer" Wislicony was responsible from German side for organization of mass deportation of Jews from Hungary in May and June has been transferred back to Budapest from Temesvar. His return at this time is most disquieting sign.

Another report from Budapest dated September 13 received through representative of Hungarian resistance movement in Zurich indicates that it was possible during July and August (Legation's 4394, July 11) to organize evacuation of some 7,000 Jewish men including the families of 400 from southern Hungary to partisan controlled Yugoslav territory. Men capable bearing arms have been enrolled Partisan forces those physically unsuited, women and children have been moved to interior but are living under extremely primitive conditions. In attempt alleviate this situation have recently financed shipment of medical and sanitary supplies for these refugees.

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APOSTOLIC DELEGATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D. C.

No. 581/42

September 25, 1944

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

My dear Mr. Pehle:

I have been just informed by the Holy See that according to a report of the Apostolic Nuncio in Budapest the situation among the Jewish people of Hungary is now much less acute. This is attributed to the fact that the officials responsible for the atrocities previously committed have now been eliminated from power.

It gives me pleasure to bring the foregoing to your knowledge, and with sentiments of esteem, and every good wish, I remain

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed)
A. G. CICOGHANI

A. G. Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate

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NCB-516
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (S)

Ankara
Dated August 23, 1944
Rec'd 5 p.m., 24th

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1546, August 23, 5 p.m.

FOR PEHLE WRB FROM HIRSCHMANN ANKARA NO. 139

Supplementing the Embassy's 1514, August 13, which outlined the new arrangement relating to Turkish transit visas to be issued in Budapest, Constanza and Burgas you are informed that the Bulgarian Government has offered (REDEPTEL 678, August 4) to allow the ships VILA and PIRIN to be used for the transport of refugees to Istanbul from Burgas. It is hoped that one of these ships will make a trip every ten days carrying refugees to whom transit visas have been granted by the Turkish Consuls. It was contemplated that the refugees who would be permitted to leave Bulgaria by rail to the number of 400 to 500 weekly would be transported by these two boats or other ones substituted for them. In view of the fact that a delay may occur in starting the operation of the boats Mr. Kelley has requested the Turkish authorities during this interim period to make provision for the movement of the refugees by rail. His request has been granted.

This new arrangement represents a new departure by the Turkish authorities in respect to transit facilities through Turkey for refugees from the Balkans destined for Palestine. In our opinion it is a broad concession since the arrangement lays the basis insofar as the Turks are concerned for very substantial rescue work through this country. The arrangement is the successful culmination of the Board's efforts and of a series of representations by Mr. Kelley to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on various aspects of the arrangement. The Embassy has also made representations on certain phases of the arrangement.

Also for your information while we are informed that Rumania has definitely agreed to provide transit facilities for refugees from Hungary, our efforts to secure a similar concession from the Bulgarian Government are still proceeding. Meanwhile we are exerting every endeavor to facilitate emigration in every way possible under the arrangement.

Despite the broad scope of the new arrangement complications arise so suddenly that the movement of refugees may continue to be delayed. It has been confirmed to us today by the International

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Red Cross that although 2195 Jews in Hungary have all their visas in order including transit visas the German authorities in Hungary have not yet granted permission for these people to depart.

KELLEY

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: September 22, 1944
NUMBER: 6276

McClelland sends the following for the War Refugee Board.

Reference is made herein to the Department's September 14 cable No. 3185.

A note dated September 8 from Swiss Federal Political Department received by the British Legation at Bern and reporting substance of a conversation between an unnamed German Foreign Office official and Swiss Minister Feldscher at Berlin is the basis for the British Minister's telegram under reference. An approach had been made to the Germans by Feldscher concerning emigration of same initial group of 2,000 Hungarian Jews from Hungary holding Palestine certificates for whom the Swiss Legation at Budapest issued a collective passport in late July. (Legation's August 3 cable No. 4972 and August 5 cable No. 5043 mentioned this). The Germans replied, as British Minister's telegram stated, that since the departure of these people for Palestine would disturb "German relations with Arabs" they could not permit these people to go. However, the German Foreign Office intimated to Feldscher ("a laissez entendre") "that if these Jews were going to American or British territory their departure would be viewed more favorably" ("envisagerait plus favorablement le depart, et cetera"). Consequently there is no question whatsoever of a concrete offer on the part of the German Government to permit such a group to depart if Allies agreed to accept them in either American or British territory but a vague statement only that "more favorable consideration" would or might be given to such a proposal. In addition the Swiss note reports very definite influence on decisions and plans of Gestapo and SS who are obviously, so far as the German Government is concerned, in control of the Jewish situation in Hungary.

The British Legation at Bern with whom I discussed this question is of the opinion that the Swiss Legation at Budapest should not under any circumstances be requested to deliver to the Germans lists of Hungarian Jews and that transit of any group or groups of Jews through German-controlled territory at this particular time would be, to say the least, an extremely hazardous undertaking. Unless real control by some such organ as ICRC could be assured permission for such transit if it were granted could scarcely be relied upon. It is the feeling of the British Legation here that the responsibility for recommending such a move could not be assumed by it.

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In agreement with the point of view of the British I feel that it would be exceedingly dangerous to try to evacuate Hungarian Jews through territory controlled by the Germans which, now that exit by way of Bulgaria and Rumania is barred, is the only existing route. With respect to the eventuality of the Germans attempting to hold the Allies responsible for not accepting an offer which it could hardly be said, after all, has been concretely made would on their part constitute pure casuistry.

As an alternative an offer might be made to the Germans via the Swiss to grant temporary haven in Allied territory to a group of 2,000 or more Hungarian Jews who did not have Palestine certificates and who did not plan to go to Palestine eventually as the Legation's August 26 cable No. 5579 suggested. Of course from the Jewish point of view this would raise very knotty problem of selection in Hungary of a non-Palestine group. The possibility exists for the British to declare formally that this group would not go to Palestine and the Germans' alleged objection to Palestine immigration would thus be offset. It could be stated, if the Germans insisted on knowing the ultimate destination, that division of this group among various overseas countries of immigration was being actively arranged. It might be possible, in order to ease the problem of settlement of such a group in the postwar, if this could be done without German suspicion being aroused, to select Hungarian Jews who desired to return to their country when the war is over. The idea of getting Jews out of Europe permanently is an obsession in certain Nazi circles and they will not tolerate the departure of those they feel may come back again.

An additional alternative of a more positive nature would be to make a concrete offer to admit a group of 1,000 or more Hungarian Jewish children into the United States, for instance, those whose parents have been deported in line with August 21 cable No. 2877 from the Department. Pending possibility to evacuate such children to the United States they could possibly be conveyed under ICRC control from Hungary for a temporary sojourn in Switzerland.

HARRISON

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209

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATE: August 26, 1944
NUMBER: 5579

McClelland sends the following for War Refugee Board.

It was recommended by ICRC, in the course of recent conversations, that our Government in concert with the British Government indicate to the Government of Hungary its willingness to transport a certain number of Hungarian Jews whose removal is not based on possession of Palestine certificates and who do not plan to go to Palestine to some specified haven of refuge in Allied territory. It is felt by ICRC that such an offer might have a greater chance of success than the present proposals of emigration for Hungarian Jews to Palestine as it would offset German disapproval of Palestine emigration based on the alleged German wish not to endanger their good relations with Arabian Mufti. It is ICRC's opinion that such evacuation could best be effected via Rumania as a more practical and safer route than transit German-controlled territory to come to Switzerland. I feel that the proposal is worth a trial since it has definite points in its favor and it would involve Hungarian Jews who would ultimately wish to return to their country. In this regard, the Board's attention is called to Tangier's offer of five hundred entry visas.

In line with Legation's cable of August 19, number 5397, we strongly recommend that propaganda pressure on the Government of Hungary be maintained. The Government of Hungary is showing a tendency to "relax on its laurels" following its "generous" offer to permit Jews to emigrate, meanwhile passively allowing the Germans to carry out a further deportation of people who after all are Hungarian nationals. Fact such acquiescence constitutes common guilt with Germans for which the Hungarians also will be held responsible after the war. This sort would also strengthen the hand of those Hungarians of good will in the country who from the start have opposed such Jewish persecution. Use of Hungarian language pamphlets as well as radio warnings are commended by competent Hungarian circles here.

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: September 9, 1944
NUMBER: 3120

FOR MCCLELLAND.

Reference is made to your 5579 of August 26, paragraph one. You may draw attention of Intercross to text of this Government's reply to Intercross of August 11 (see Department's 2657 of August 2) in which it undertook to arrange for the care of all Jews permitted to leave Hungary under the present circumstances, who reach neutral or United Nations' territory, and to find for them temporary havens of refuge. Nothing in that reply implied limitation to Jews in possession of Palestine certificates or planning to go to Palestine.

Furthermore, you may draw attention of Intercross to special provisions made in favor of persons to whom American immigration visas were issued or authorized after July 1, 1941 (Department's 2605 of August 1); to extension of children's visa facilities to Jewish children from Hungary (Department's 2877 of August 21); to provisions in favor of close relatives of American citizens and alien residents (Department's 2918 of August 24); and to assurances obtained by this Government from Ireland and Honduras in favor of children from Hungary (Department's 2978 of August 29, WRB 151 to Bern). In addition, Nicaragua has agreed to admit 100 children from Hungary, and Mexico has expressed its willingness to give emergency shelter to refugees from enemy territory for duration of war.

The cooperation of Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, and Turkey has also been requested by this Government in respect of admission of any Jews who would be permitted to leave Hungary, and these requests have been partly successful. Spain alone has authorized 2,000 visas. Sweden is reported to have agreed to admit children, numerous adults, and persons to whom American visas were issued or authorized after July 1, 1941. Rumania is also cooperating, but current events on Hungarian-Rumanian border presumably preclude evacuation via Rumania.

Pointing out the foregoing to Intercross, you may reiterate this Government's refusal ever to limit its undertakings with respect to the emigration of Jews from Hungary to any number or particular category of Jews or to Jews going to any particular country.

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and its protest against the attempt of German and Hungarian authorities to introduce such arbitrary limitations.

Recommendation contained in last paragraph of your 5579 is appreciated and is being acted upon.

THIS IS WRB CABLE TO BERN NO. 158

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: American Legation, Bern
TO: Secretary of State, Washington
DATED: September 15, 1944
NUMBER: 6093

The following message is from McClelland for WRB.

With reference to my 6015, dated September 12, 1944, during the past fortnight we have received reports, which have been confirmed by Kasztner in late talks with Saly Mayer, that the Government of Hungary is planning to take the disposition given below with respect to above 200,000 Jewish individuals remaining in Hungary, in Budapest mainly.

1. Every physically able bodied man and woman will be placed in compulsory work in agriculture and industry in various parts of nation in the interests of national defense.

2. As early as August 24, preparations were being made to establish two large camps having a combined capacity of 120,000 individuals for all Jews from Budapest who were not suited for work from a physical standpoint. In this connection, Kasztner declared that such camps were to be placed under military control, while late press reports issuing from Budapest write of supervision by the Red Cross. It is not specified whether such supervision is international or Hungarian, although on September 12 ICRC informed me they possessed no details with respect to this arrangement. However, it appears improbable that ICRC will be in a position to exercise any effective degree of control over these camps, because of continued failure on the part of the Germans to issue transit visas for ICRC personnel from Switzerland, even though both Saly Mayer and I have made the suggestion that they contemplate appointing as their delegates certain responsible Swiss citizens living in Budapest. It seems that there is little doubt that the Jews themselves in Hungary will be asked to render financial assistance in establishing camps under this plan.

3. Every infirm and old person who is not able to even go to camps will be grouped in unspecified localities in "Jewish hospitals."

The following is for your confidential information: Kasztner declared that about 200,000 Jewish persons stayed in Hungary in Budapest principally; 360,000 others had been deported and the Gestapo in Budapest admitted they had been exterminated; and finally 160,000 were in labor service outside Hungary (alive presumably) at several localities in German controlled territory (Lobau Mauthausen, Strasshof and Resencu in Austria were mentioned.)

HARRISON

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ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington
TO: American Legation, Bern
DATED: October 6, 1944
NUMBER: 3435

To Minister Harrison and McClelland.

Reference your 6447 of September 28.

(1) The O. W. I. is informed of the situation.

(2) Please request the cooperation of the Swiss Foreign Office in conveying the sense of the following message to appropriate Hungarian authorities. You should also employ such unofficial channels as may be available to you to the same end.

QUOTE The Government of the United States has learned of the plan of Hungarian authorities to remove the Jews still remaining in Budapest to putative work camps in the provinces. In view of the fate of Jews who were removed in previous months from other cities to similar camps, and in view of the approach of winter, the Government of the United States has good reason to regard the present plan as a further measure of mass extermination, for mass extermination may be accomplished either by the methods employed at camps of final destination in Poland, or by subjecting large numbers of people to under-nourishment, hard physical labor and unhygienic living conditions in improvised camps. Consequently, the United States Government considers it appropriate to remind Hungarian authorities of its determination, as expressed by the President of the United States on March 24, that INNERQUOTE none who participate in these acts of savagery shall go unpunished***. All who share the guilt shall share the punishment. CLOSE INNERQUOTE. This determination was publicly reaffirmed on May 31 and June 28 by members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, respectively.

QUOTE The Government of the United States, however, recognizes the possibility that the present plan in fact may have been evolved to achieve genuine humanitarian ends as has been claimed by various Hungarian authorities. To the extent that the plan, if put in operation, may achieve such ends, the Government of the United States will, of course, recognize the validity of such claims. On the other hand, should the removal of the Jews from Budapest to provincial camps be but a prelude to their further removal to extermination centers or otherwise result in their

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deaths, Hungarian authorities are fully apprised of the attitude of the people and Government of the United States. UNQUOTE.

(3) Please advise the Department and Board of the action taken by you.

For your information, Amembassy Lisbon and Ampolad Caserta are being requested to convey a similar message to Hungarian authorities through such channels as are available to them.

This is WRB Cable No. 198.

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LF3-225
Distribution of true
reading only by special
arrangement. (S)

Bern
Dated December 7, 1944
Rec'd 7:33 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.
7973, December 7, 2 p.m.

Foreign Office note November 25 quoted Hungarian response
(your 3435, October 6 WRB 198) delivered Swiss Legation Budapest
November 8. Following is substance note:

Jewish workers needed within frame work Hungary's total war
mobilization. Concentration Jews fit for work not discriminatory
as on basis law 1939 all physically fit persons without distinc-
tion race nationality or Religion subject military labor service
under military discipline. Concentration Jews work camps can not
(repeat not) be considered as punishment camps. Actually Hungar-
ian and German governments have consented visit Intercross dele-
gate camps where Hungarian Jews performing labor in Germany. Fur-
thermore the protection of these Jews is appropriately provided
for according to nature of work performed.

Solution of Jewish question Hungary decided solely in light
interests Hungary. Foreign threats of whatever kind cannot (re-
peat not) change this principle. Jewish workers represent part
all Hungarian workers and are used within framework Hungarian
war effort in a form which appears appropriate Hungarian Govern-
ment.

Government intends treat Jews in just and humane manner.
Such measures depend, however, upon attitude Jews themselves
and upon whether further enemy terroristic attacks on Hungarian
civilian population occur since these provoke increased opposi-
tion Hungarian population. General standard life Jews will not
(repeat not) be lower than working classes.

Regarding issuance passports and other documentation by
Foreign Mission Budapest to Hungarian Jews for their emigration
neutral countries or Palestine Hungarian Government reiterates it
is still prepared to recognize these papers and accord immigra-
tion Jews concerned within frame-work number visas agreed upon by
German Government for transit through German territory in case
normal diplomatic relation with interested country so permit.

Despatch follows.

HUDDLE

WRB

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