

Projects AND Documents, Volume I
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Coop. Great Britain

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

GREAT BRITAIN: GENERAL SUMMARY

In a cable addressed to the U.S. Embassy in London the Embassy was asked to make clear to the British Government that the establishment of the War Refugee Board represents this Government's determination to carry out effectively and without delay the policy heretofore agreed upon by the two governments to take all possible measures for the speedy rescue and relief of the victims of enemy persecution. Ambassador Winant was asked to confer with the British on the possibility of their implementing the Board's program through such a declaration as that issued by the President and through instructions to British representatives in other countries comparable to the circular cable instructions sent by the United States to its Missions upon the creation of the Board (Cable No. 774 to London dated January 31).

Ambassador Winant promptly reported that he had had informal discussions with the Foreign Office concerning the Board and its work. It was stated that question had arisen in the House of Commons as to whether the British intend to make a similar move. The Foreign Office indicated that the British probably would not set up such a board inasmuch as a Cabinet Committee on Refugees already exists and functions (though its composition has not yet been made public). Winant also reported that the British wanted to know if such measures as surprise parachute troop movements were contemplated in carrying out Board purposes, the Secretary of War's membership on the Board having suggested possible promise of military measures in connection with rescue operations (Cable No. 1006 from London dated February 5).

In reply the Board indicated that the use of combat units is not envisioned unless the rescues are the direct result of military operations. The Board again asked for the reaction of the Foreign Office to the proposal that instructions be issued to British representatives abroad comparable to U. S. instructions of January 25 (Cable No. 1019 to London dated February 9).

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A subsequent cable from Winant repeated previous advice to the effect that the British Foreign Office expected to inform its representatives, particularly in countries where the refugee question is active, of American instructions to its Missions on refugee matters. British representatives were to be instructed to cooperate with U.S. representatives in the matter. This cable also set forth the substance of conversations with Mr. Eden and referred to his statement in Parliament reaffirming the British Government's "earnest desire and practical intention of associating themselves with the United States Government, and with the War Refugee Board in particular, in endeavoring to carry out the aims which the President has set before it." Eden added, however, that the British do not consider it necessary to set up any additional organization for this purpose (Cable No. 1181 from London dated February 11).

Another communication from London quoted the text of a strong editorial (the third) appearing in the Manchester Guardian, praising the action of the President in establishing the War Refugee Board and urging the British to take similar action (Cable No. 1222 from London dated February 12; see also Cable No. 1210 from London dated February 12 and Cable No. 1655 from London dated February 29).

Certain questions raised by Dr. Nahum Goldmann of the World Jewish Congress in connection with relief and evacuation activities were relayed by Winant in a later communication (Cable No. 1541 from London dated February 24). With reference to Goldmann's first question, the Board indicated that it had not made any decision to approach the blockade authorities concerning the shipment of supplies from this country to the Jews and other persecuted people of Europe (see II B Policy on the Blockade). With respect to a second question, the Board indicated that it had in preparation a statement advising the British, among other things, of the licensing by the Treasury Department of rescue and relief operations in enemy and enemy-occupied territories; the Board further indicated that it had no objection to Jewish or other organizations in Great Britain appealing to the British Government for permission to carry on and finance operations similar to those being authorized by this Government. (See Cable No. 2033 to London dated March 17.)

Other reports from Winant dealt with anticipation of debate in the House of Commons on the British Government's refugee policy, the debate having arisen in connection with the question of funds for the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees. Winant advised that an attempt was expected to be made to show a rift between this Government and the British on refugee policy. The Foreign Office, Winant said, proposed to reply that this was not the case, that the British and American

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Governments have machinery for acting together on refugee matters. (See Cable No. 1554 from London dated February 25; see also Cable No. 1082 dated February 8, Cable No. 1144 dated February 10, and Cable No. 1597 dated February 28, all from London.)

In response the Board repeated this Government's desire to cooperate with other governments; hope was expressed that U. S. action in this field would not be unilateral but that the British Government would actively cooperate in relief and rescue measures. Whether or not the two governments drift apart in refugee policy, it was added, depended upon the concrete steps taken by each of the governments to put the declared policies in effect. Winant was advised that a detailed statement of action already taken by the Board, as well as specific relief and evacuation programs contemplated, was in preparation; the Board's feeling that the British Government should have this information before making its reply in Parliament was emphasized, since the British would then be in a better position to determine what they may be prepared to do to carry out a similar policy (Cable No. 1503 to London dated February 29; see attachment #1). Such a statement on the Board's activities was later forwarded to Winant (Cable No. 1812 to London dated March 10; see attachment #2). A message containing even more detailed information with respect to the remittance of funds and similar transactions approved by the Board was subsequently dispatched (Cable No. 2303 to London dated March 25; see attachment #3).

The Board was later advised by Winant that the House of Commons debated the question of funds for the Intergovernmental Committee for two hours, finally voting the sum requested by the Government. Critics of the Intergovernmental Committee favored the establishment of a British agency comparable to the Board. The Government took the position that while an international body can handle some matters better than the agency of any one nation, there is a field for national action in these matters; it was therefore pleased at the establishment of the Board and voiced the intention of giving its "very warmest support and sympathy." The Government reiterated its conviction that the establishment of a comparable British agency was unnecessary in view of the existence of a cabinet committee already concerned with such matters; constitutional objections to the establishment of such a board were also suggested. (See Cable No. 1711 from London dated March 2.)

In a letter dated March 4 and addressed to the Board by the State Department it was indicated that concern had been expressed by the British over the financial aspects of the recent licensing by the Treasury of International Red Cross purchases in enemy territory. State urgently requested that proposed future transactions be cleared in

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their "economic warfare aspects" with the Foreign Economic Administration and with the British. In reply the Board indicated that operations in this field have been in accordance with this Government's policy, which has been established for some time; that, although the Board intends to keep the British informed of what it does and, of course, intends to consider any objections they may have, it does not contemplate clearing its programs with them, especially since that has not been its procedure in this field in the past. (See attachments #4, 5, 6, and 7; see also II C, Policy on the Clearance of Certain Licensing with the British, for later developments on this score.)

In connection with Mr. Stettinius's trip to London, a memorandum was prepared on March 10, summarizing problems involved in the Board's work for possible use there in discussion of refugee matters.

A reply was received through the Embassy in London from the British Foreign Office to the suggestion made by this Government that the British authorize the allocation of immigration certificates to certain refugee children, so as to permit them to enter Palestine within the total allowed under the White Paper. The suggestion by this Government had been made in connection with the Swiss effort to obtain exit permits for Jewish children in France. The British replied that since the Swiss had not yet obtained any promise of exit permits and had made no representations to either the Intergovernmental Committee or the British Government regarding conditions under which they would receive the children, the question of the children's eventually going to Palestine was regarded as entirely hypothetical. The Foreign Office therefore felt that "it would be undesirable to freeze any substantial number of certificates for cases which may never arise." The Foreign Office stated, however, that it would give appropriate consideration to the matter if and when the Swiss Government approached the Intergovernmental Committee for concrete assurances. The Board was also advised that the unused balance of the original quota of 75,000 Jewish immigrants for Palestine fixed by the White Paper was approximately 26,000. In this connection the Secretary of State for the Colonies indicated in Parliament in November 1943, with respect to the balance admissible under the existing quota, that those unable to reach Palestine by March 31, 1944, would not be excluded by the time feature and that "no effort will be lacking on the part of His Majesty's Government to facilitate their arrival subject to the criterion of economic absorptive capacity." (See Dispatch No. 14393 from London dated March 11; see also attachments #2 and 3 to VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France.)

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Later in March Ambassador Winant was asked to communicate with the appropriate British officials as soon as possible with a view to their asking Britain's representative on the Mediterranean shipping board (MEDBO) to assist in efforts to arrange for the charter of an Italian vessel to the Turks in connection with projected evacuation operations (Cable No. 2516 to London dated March 31; see attachment #8.) Both the Foreign Office and the Ministry of War Transport were approached on this matter and "generally favorable" instructions were said to have gone forward on this score (Cable No. 3233 from London dated April 20).

Winant next reported that, in line with the Board's request, the British had been asked to approve the diversion of a Swedish ship from the Greek relief fleet for the purpose of carrying additional refugees from Constanza to Turkey. Because of the urgency of the matter, Winant simultaneously approached the head of the Relief Section in the British Ministry of Economic Warfare. Although the reply of the British Government had not yet been received, Winant reported that the MEW official had agreed to such a diversion. Choice of the ship to be diverted was to be left to the Swedes, though use of the "S.S. Bardaland" was considered likely if Russian and German naval and air safe-conducts could be obtained (Cable No. 3005 to London dated April 15 and Cable No. 3233 from London dated April 20). Formal approval of such a diversion was subsequently obtained from the British and negotiations were begun with the Swedish Government. For a complete account of this matter see VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey.

Information available to the Board indicated that Switzerland and other neutral countries contiguous to enemy-held territory would be in a position to receive larger numbers of children and presumably of adult refugees from enemy oppression if facilities for additional imports of clothing and foodstuffs were granted. Accordingly, Winant was asked to undertake to obtain from the appropriate British authorities prompt concurrence in the Board's position that definitive assurances should be given to the neutrals that additional food and clothing would be allowed through the blockade, subject to appropriate safeguards, in amounts sufficient to meet increased needs arising from their reception of refugees (Cable No. 3953 to London dated May 18). The Board was advised in this connection that a meeting held at the Ministry of Economic Warfare in London in March, to discuss with the Swiss the possibility of their receiving still more child refugees from German-held territory, touched upon this question (Dispatch No. 14623 from London dated March 23). For a more detailed account of this matter, including later developments, see II B, The Blockade. See also II E, Food and Clothing Stockpiles in Neutral Countries.

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In June the British agreed to the joint establishment in Tripolitania of a temporary camp for refugees from southern Italy (see VI G - 1 a, Temporary Havens in North Africa: Tripolitania and Cyrenaica).

British cooperation was also enlisted in connection with removing Jewish refugees from southern Italy, as well as from Turkey, to temporary camps in Palestine (see VI G - 3, Temporary Havens in Palestine).

Later in June Winant reported from London the substance of a memorandum from the British Foreign Office with respect to the Board's proposal that refugees escaping from enemy territory to southern Italy be removed as soon as possible to temporary havens elsewhere. In this memorandum the Foreign Office stated that it agrees emphatically with the Board's view that the escape of refugees from the Balkans to Italy should in no way be discouraged. Toward this end, it was said that British military authorities in the Middle East remain prepared to accommodate some 40,000 Yugoslav refugees in Egypt provided the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration succeeds in obtaining the necessary medical staff. In the absence of the required personnel, however, British military authorities doubt that they can accommodate more than the 25,000 who have already arrived in Egypt. The British indicated that they are therefore pressing the European headquarters of UNRRA on this matter.

The Foreign Office also indicated that as soon as the Rumanian Red Cross, the Swiss authorities in Rumania, and the International Red Cross, in conjunction with the Jewish Agency for Palestine, can make the necessary arrangements, a British ship can be ready on thirty days' notice to proceed to Constanza for the evacuation of Jewish refugees. While the Foreign Office felt that the German Government is no more likely to grant the necessary safe-conduct in this case than in that of the "S.S. Tari," it was said that nevertheless the matter would be actively pursued.

At the same time the Foreign Office indicated that it was examining the proposal that Sicily might be used as a temporary haven for refugees.

In connection with the Board's belief that Camp Lyautey at Fedhala should not be opened to refugees from Italy but should be kept available for refugees arriving from Spain, complete agreement was expressed.

With respect to the Board's proposal that the British grant Palestine certificates to Jewish refugees in liberated Italy, the British felt that since these refugees are in an area where they are safe from enemy persecution, preference should be given under the limited quota allotted for immigration into Palestine to those Jews elsewhere whose lives are still in danger as a result of enemy oppression. The Foreign

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Office concluded by pointing out that while considerable numbers of Yugoslav refugees from Hungary have already been received in Palestine, and while it does not doubt the desirability of moving other refugees from southern Italy for operational reasons, it believes that alternative places of refuge should be used to the greatest possible extent. (See Cable No. 5104 from London dated June 28 comprising attachment #9.)

For an account of a scheme proposed to the Board by the British to supplement financing of rescue and relief projects, see VII A, Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Committee.

See also II C, Clearance of Certain Licensing with the British, and III A, Appointment of Special Representatives.

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. U. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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CABLE NO. 1503 TO LONDON FROM THE BOARD

February 29, 1944

Refer to your 1554 of February 25 with respect to anticipated debate in the House of Commons on the refugee problem.

As previously stated, it is the policy of this Government to encourage and participate in effective cooperative efforts with other governments in taking all possible measures for the speedy rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of Hitler's persecution. This Government hopes and believes that its actions in this matter will not be unilateral and that the British Government will actively cooperate in concrete measures designed to carry out this policy.

We agree that it would be unfortunate if this Government and the British Government should drift apart in refugee policy. We hope such will not be the case. Whether this will happen is not of course dependent as much upon the expressions of policy made by each government as it is upon the actual steps which are taken by each government to put these policies into effect.

Although the War Refugee Board has been in existence only a few weeks a number of concrete measures have been initiated for the purpose of carrying out without delay the policy announced by the President. The Board is now preparing for your information and for submission to the British Government a detailed statement of the action already taken and of the programs initiated to rescue and bring relief to war refugees. We feel that the Foreign Office should know, before making its proposed reply in Parliament, that the Board has under consideration various additional steps of which we hope to apprise it in the near future. The British Government will then be in a better position to judge the actual significance of the policy of this Government and to determine the steps it is prepared to take to carry out a similar policy.

The War Refugee Board has no objection in principle to a plenary meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee, but has not definitely formulated its views on future actions which may be requested of the Committee.

The War Refugee Board is pleased to be informed that the British Foreign Office has instructed all of its missions abroad to consult with United States diplomatic and consular representatives with a view to cooperative action.

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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CABLE NO. 1812 TO LONDON FROM THE BOARD

March 10, 1944

Following our cable no. 1503 of February 29 you may wish to make clear to the British Government that the steps which the War Refugee Board is taking and is prepared to take are in accordance with the following general patterns:

(1) The Board realizes that its chances of saving most of the Jews and other victims of enemy oppression from death lies in the possibility of changing the actions and attitude of the enemy, particularly his satellites, subordinates and functionaries. The Board is convinced that it is of utmost importance to undertake at once an organized and concentrated effort to make clear, by all appropriate means, to all Axis satellites that the Allied Governments view in a most serious light their assistance in any form to Hitler's program to exterminate the Jews, and other similar groups, regarding all such action as criminal participation in organized murder. The Board also believes it necessary to make clear to the satellites by all possible means, its intention to do everything in its power to rescue such unfortunates who are in danger of death, in order not only to give the satellites a clear view of the attitude of this country in the matter, but also of the opportunities which exist for assisting in the execution of our policy. The Board feels very strongly that a campaign of this kind must be made through all possible channels and be constantly repeated at every available opportunity. The Board believes that parallel action on the part of other Allied Governments would do a great deal to assure the success of this endeavor. At the moment it is important that pressure be brought to bear particularly on Rumania and Bulgaria, because in those areas there are many refugees in imminent danger of death who can be evacuated to Turkey and other places if those Governments permit it.

In addition to bringing pressure through various channels and making formal representations to the governments of the satellite countries, the Board feels that there should be employed in this campaign all available means for effecting the widest dissemination of our attitude not only to the governments themselves but to the largest number possible of the people of satellite countries. In this connection the Office of War Information is cooperating with the War Refugee Board in bringing home to the people in Germany and the satellite countries the fact that we consider

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this matter to be of paramount importance and intend vigorously to pursue all possible means of accomplishing our objective.

(2) In addition to this program designed to bring about a change in the actions and attitude of our enemies, the Board is convinced that there is a real opportunity for actually bringing many of these peoples out of German controlled territory. The Board is determined to do what it can to bring these people out, in as large numbers as possible. The Board is certain that this Government and its Allies can find for these persons temporary havens of refuge. The Board feels very strongly that some solution of any problems which may arise in finding a temporary refuge for these people once they have escaped from Hitler can and must be found by the British and American Governments and that in any event such problems must be subordinated to the program of rescue.

The following examples of measures which have already been taken by the Board will illustrate the extent to which this Government is prepared to go in actually bringing people out of Hitler's control.

(a) This Government has requested the cooperation of the neutral European countries in this endeavor. Thus, in order to increase the flow of refugees through Turkey from occupied areas this Government is being requested to relax border and other controls, etc. The Board is offering to arrange for financing the setting up of reception camps which would receive refugees entering those countries and would make it possible to take them on to other places as rapidly as possible.

(b) This Government is actively engaged in trying to solve the problem of getting ships to transport refugees. Thus, one of the greatest opportunities for actually rescuing such people exists in the areas adjacent to Turkey and the Black Sea. It is known that in Transnistria, Rumania and Bulgaria there are substantial numbers of refugees in imminent danger of death. It also appears that arrangements can be made with the Turkish Government to receive refugees from these areas. There are strong indications that the Rumanian Government at least will permit a substantial number of these refugees to leave Rumania. It is indispensable that means of transportation be found at once.

The Board, in this connection, is endeavoring to arrange for a small Turkish vessel to proceed to the Rumanian port of Constanza and evacuate to Turkey approximately one thousand children. That the charter of the S. S. VATAN, a small Turkish vessel, might be obtained, has been reported by the Board's representative in Turkey providing a guarantee to replace the ship in the event of loss would be made to the Turkish Government. Such a guaranty was promptly offered by this Government. The

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possibility of obtaining some Swedish ships for this purpose is also being taken up with the Swedish Government. The Board is also exploring other possibilities.

(c) Licenses to six private organizations in the United States have already been issued by this Government giving permission to their representatives in Switzerland, in order to carry on relief and evacuation operations in enemy territory, to engage in the required communication and financing transactions. Our 242 of January 18, 1944 and also our A-139 of January 31, 1944, describe, in this connection, licenses which now have been amended to permit the acquisition, if necessary, of local funds against payment in free exchange or free currency notes, from persons in enemy or enemy-occupied territory. Four additional private agencies have received identical licenses. This Government concluded in issuing these licenses that any danger involved in permitting the enemy to acquire such relatively insubstantial quantities of foreign exchange was far outweighed by the saving of lives.

More complete details will be sent to you shortly concerning these measures as well as others which the Board has taken or is planning to initiate.

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State Dept. Letter, 1211-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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CABLE NO. 2303 TO LONDON FROM THE BOARD

March 25, 1944

The message given below refers to our telegrams of February 29 and March 10, 1944, nos. 1503 and 1812, which partially presents the steps the War Refugee Board has taken or is prepared to take in order to implement the Board's announced policies. The more detailed statement given below is for the British and refers to remittances of funds and similar transactions which have been authorized following the War Refugee Board's recommendation.

Relief and specific rescue projects:

A number of private organizations in the United States have been granted authority to carry on evacuation and relief operations in occupied Europe. Following the Board's recommendation, the Treasury Department has issued licenses granting the representatives of these organizations in Switzerland permission to finance their operations by acquiring the requisite local currency if necessary from persons in enemy territory against the payment of free exchange and to carry on such communications as may be necessary with persons in enemy territory. The Board, Treasury and State Departments have taken the position that in these cases the main consideration is the saving of lives, and that this is paramount to the possibility that certain amounts of free exchange may become available in enemy territory. Among the relief and rescue projects the execution of which has been facilitated by the Board and which have been sponsored by private organizations are the following:

1. Evacuation from France to Switzerland.

(a) Evacuation of Abandoned Jewish Children. There has been issued a license for one rescue program involving abandoned children in hiding in France numbering several thousand who may be deported to Poland in the near future. Attempts are being made to sustain and keep alive these children in France but they cannot be brought into Switzerland in large numbers until some assurance is received by the Swiss Government that the children will be removed after the hostilities end. The Board has proposed that this Government give the Swiss assurances that American visas will be granted to 4,000 children from France entering Switzerland and that removals will be granted for these visas as necessary.

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(b) The removal of Political and Christian Refugees and Scholars. Also steps have been taken by the Board to facilitate the operations which several private organizations are carrying out designed to rescue and give relief to political and Christian refugees and scholars who have been unable to leave France. Upon the recommendation of the Board, the Treasury issued licenses to make funds available in Switzerland for use in carrying forward this program.

(c) World Jewish Congress Program. With the aid of the Board, the World Jewish Congress has worked out a program to evacuate refugees into North Africa, Switzerland and Spain from Rumania and France. The Treasury Department has issued licenses authorizing the necessary operation up to a total cost of \$100,000 of which amount \$25,000 has already been sent to Switzerland.

2. Evacuation from Poland to Hungary.

Between the War Refugee Board and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada there has been worked out a plan to evacuate Jews from Poland to Hungary. In Hungary there are persons who are in a position to aid refugees across the Polish border into Hungary where there is already a large Jewish community to help the refugees and aid them to become absorbed into the Hungarian economy. The Union has been granted authorization to communicate with and transmit funds to these persons. To meet the requirements of this plan, \$100,000 has been sent to Switzerland.

3. Program for Feeding Internees in Croatia, Hungary, Rumania and Czechoslovakia.

The International Red Cross has informed the Intergovernmental Committee of an urgent need for funds to purchase foodstuffs for distribution to internees in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary and Croatia. A large private organization in the United States provided \$100,000 at once after an approach was made by the Board. Under Treasury Department license, this sum has been remitted to Switzerland which permits the buying of the required foodstuffs not only in neutral countries but in Hungary and Rumania as well.

4. Plans for the Relief of Refugees in Shanghai

Relief is presently being administered to 10,000 stranded refugees in Shanghai pursuant to licenses granted by the Treasury Department at the request of the Board to two private organizations. Authorization is given by these licenses for the borrowing of funds in Shanghai against a promise for reimbursement after the war's end.

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By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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LETTER FROM BRITISH EMBASSY TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT

February 29, 1944

Dear Mr. Taft:

As I informed you during our conversation this morning, the Ministry of Economic Warfare have telegraphed us to enquire regarding the information recently given by the United States Embassy in London to the Intergovernmental Committee, to the effect that the U.S. Government has agreed to license the transfer of \$100,000 to the International Red Cross for the purchase of supplies in Hungary and Roumania to be dispatched to Jews in enemy territory.

I should like in the first place to emphasise that there is no intention on the part of the British Government to place obstacles in the way of relief measures on behalf of the Jews in enemy territory; any such measures have their full sympathy. But the Ministry of Economic Warfare are concerned lest the enemy should derive financial advantage and in particular they are most anxious that no action should be taken which might constitute a breach in agreements which have been reached safeguarding the possible provision to the enemy of foreign exchange, at least until full consultation has taken place between the British and American Governments. Preliminary examination of this matter took place at the end of last year when certain proposals were put forward by the U. S. Treasury in connection with a proposed transfer of \$25,000 in connection with plans for the evacuation of Jews from Roumania and France. These proposals were considered in London and, as stated in Sir Ronald Campbell's letter to Mr. Breckinridge Long of January 8th, 1944, it was felt that there need be no insuperable objections to the financial side of the transaction, though there were certain difficulties against which it was considered suitable safeguards should be provided. We have not had an opportunity of discussing the question of these safeguards with you in greater detail, but in the meanwhile it would appear from the telegram referred to in the beginning of this letter, that the scope of the proposals has been very widely increased, and that they now involve not only much larger sums, but also purchases of supplies in enemy territory by the International Red Cross which were not included in the original proposals as we understood them.

However this may be and apart from the merits of the transactions in question, I am sure you will agree that the financial side of the

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proposals is a subject which requires careful joint consideration by the two Governments, more particularly in view of the precedents which may be created by any modification of rules which have hitherto governed financial measures of this nature. I should therefore be very grateful if you would look into this matter, and let me have particulars of the transactions involved, for transmission to my Government.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Stone of Foreign Economic Administration.

Yours sincerely,

G. F. Thorold

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Govt. telegram, 1-12-72

By RHP Date SEP 28 1972

LETTER FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO THE BOARD

March 4, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle:

I apologize for my erroneous statement Thursday about the letter from the War Relief Control Board to the President. I was very glad to hear of the progress made that afternoon on the jurisdictional question. I assume it is being settled.

Meanwhile, Mr. Thorold, of the British Embassy, called on me and at my suggestion put his inquiry in writing. I enclose a copy of his letter, together with a copy of my reply.

I presented the matter to the Policy Committee on Wednesday morning. As a result, I am instructed to urge you to communicate at once with the British and to acquaint them fully with the situation. This is an important matter of economic warfare in which the two governments have been collaborating in the closest possible way. Nothing should be permitted to injure this relationship, and future programs should be worked out with this Department, Mr. Stone of Foreign Economic Administration, and Mr. Thorold, in their economic warfare aspects. Mr. Warren, of course, can secure the views of Mr. Merchant, our economic warfare man.

I might add that Mr. Thorold apparently had a copy of the license to the World Jewish Congress, and assumed that \$100,000 was the total authorized. I told him the sum was in excess of \$250,000, but gave no further information.

Sincerely yours,

Charles P. Taft
Director, Office of
Wartime Economic Affairs

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By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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attach. #6

LETTER FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY

March 4, 1944

My dear Mr. Thorold:

I have received your letter of February 29, and have sent a copy of it to Mr. J. W. Pehle, Acting Director of the War Refugee Board, with the urgent request that he acquaint you with the existing situation, and clear future transactions with you in their economic warfare aspects.

Sincerely yours,

Charles P. Taft
Director, Office of
Wartime Economic Affairs.

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LETTER TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT FROM THE BOARD

March 16, 1944

Dear Mr. Stettinius:

I have received Mr. Taft's letter of March 4, 1944, enclosing copies of a letter from Mr. Thorold of the British Embassy and of Mr. Taft's reply.

As requested by Mr. Taft, I have informed Mr. Thorold of the various specific projects approved by the Board and which are now under way, after appropriate licensing by the Treasury Department with the approval of the State Department. I have asked him to urge his government actively to cooperate in the concrete measures which we are taking. As you know, a detailed report of the activities of the War Refugee Board is being prepared for despatch to Ambassador Winant for the information of the British Foreign Office.

In view of Mr. Taft's comments, it appears to me that he may not be familiar with the background of the licensing problems involved in these rescue operations. The World Jewish Congress, which first presented to this Government a proposal for the rescue and relief of people in the occupied territories, did not obtain the necessary license until five months after the proposal was presented. This delay was due in part to the objections which had been raised by the British and finally on December 17, 1943, after detailed memoranda on the delays were presented by the Treasury to the State Department, after several conferences between the Secretaries of State and Treasury and after receipt of a cable from London stating the British position, the State Department itself issued the necessary license to the World Jewish Congress.

Following this, the Treasury Department, with the approval of the State Department, and without clearance with the British, issued licenses to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and to the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada to permit these organizations to carry on relief and evacuation operations in enemy-occupied territory from Switzerland. The World Jewish Congress license was amended so that the terms would be identical to the license issued to the two other organizations.

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Since the creation of the War Refugee Board, the projects of several other private organizations in this country have been called to its attention and the Board has approved the issuance of the necessary licenses by the Treasury Department. Bearing in mind the determined policy of this Government to save these people and the task which has been given the War Refugee Board by the President, the Board will continue to approve and sponsor projects designed to save lives. It seems clear that in cases of this kind the humanitarian considerations are paramount.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

000673

CABLE NO. 2516 TO LONDON FROM THE BOARD

March 31, 1944

WAR REFUGEE BOARD SENDS THE FOLLOWING FOR AMBASSADOR WINANT.

There has been received from the Government of Turkey an offer to charter a Turkish ship to make a single trip for the purpose of carrying a number of refugees to Haifa from Constanza. This offer is the result of an urgent attempt to facilitate the evacuation of refugees from Rumania, and long negotiations between the Government of Turkey, Ambassador Steinhardt and the War Refugee Board's representative in Ankara. The War Refugee Board has authorized immediate charter of the vessel. In order to obtain the charter the United States Government has guaranteed replacement of the Turkish ship should it be lost on the voyage. Negotiations to obtain safe conduct from the appropriate governments are being carried on at the present time.

It has been indicated by the Turkish Government that unless equivalent tonnage is chartered to them by the United States Government, the vessel referred to will make only one trip because of the shipping shortage.

The War Refugee Board is trying to meet the Turkish requirements so that the vessel will make more than one trip. The War Shipping Administration has requested Kalloch, the Mediterranean Regional Director of the War Shipping Administration, to explore the possibility that the Italians might be willing to charter to the Government of Turkey one of their vessels if arrangements for carrying out the evacuation program can be made. Kalloch, who is working through MEDBO, has asked London to request Gibson Graham, British representative on MEDBO, to help in this endeavor. We request that you communicate as soon as possible with the British Ministry of War Transport with a view to obtaining Gibson Graham's assistance in this matter.

HULL

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

000674

CABLE NO. 5104 FROM LONDON TO THE BOARD

June 28, 1944

We have just received from the Foreign Office a memorandum with respect to the wish of the War Refugee Board and the Department to remove refugees escaped from enemy territory to southern Italy, as set forth in Department's cable of June 3, No. 4413. The memorandum goes into detail with respect to the points which Randall, head of the Refugee Department of the Foreign Office, mentioned as reported in Embassy's cable of June 7, No. 4557. There follows the substance of the memorandum:

1. The anxiety of the President and the State Department for the speedy removal from southern Italy of refugees who have escaped from enemy territory is shared by the British Government. It is stated by the Foreign Office that it was aware of the large number of refugees arriving from Yugoslavia in Italy and that it agrees emphatically with the view that in no way should the escape of refugees from the Balkans to Italy be discouraged. Marshal Tito has promised cooperation and such measures as are possible to alleviate the plight of Jews in Hungary have been taken by the British authorities.

2. The British military authorities in the Middle East were prepared and willing to accommodate 40,000 Yugoslav refugees in Egypt but since UNRRA has not been able as yet to secure the necessary medical staff the military authorities doubt that they can accommodate more than the 25,000 who have arrived in Egypt already.

Therefore, the Foreign Office has requested the European headquarters of UNRRA to expedite provision of a medical staff.

3. Every effort to carry out plans already completed to move as many Jewish refugees as possible from the Balkans is being made by the British authorities. As soon as the Rumanian Red Cross, the Swiss authorities in Rumania, and the International Red Cross in conjunction with the Jewish agency for Palestine can make the necessary arrangements, a British ship can be ready at 30 days notice to proceed to Constanza for the evacuation of Jewish refugees. However, it seems that in all probability the German Government will not grant the necessary safe conduct in this case any more than in that of the SS TARI for which the American Embassy to Turkey had negotiated. However, we will actively pursue the matter.

(cont.)

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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- 2 -

4. The establishment of a refugee camp in Tripolitania has been agreed to by the British Government and it is examining the proposal that Sicily should become a destination for refugees.

5. It is agreed to by the Foreign Office that camp Lyautey at Fedhala should not be opened to refugees from Italy as it must be kept available for those refugees coming from Spain.

6. Concerning the proposal that HM Government should grant Palestine immigration certificates to Jewish refugees in liberated Italy, the British while they do not doubt the desirability of moving them for operational reasons, nevertheless feel that since they are in an area where they are safe from enemy persecution, they should give preference for rescue under the limited quotas allotted for immigration into Palestine to those Jews who are still in danger of their lives and can be got to safety out of enemy controlled territory.

The Foreign Office concludes by saying that this means that while considerable numbers of Yugoslav refugees from Italy have already been received in Palestine, in order that Palestine may be kept available for Jews escaping in increasing numbers through Turkey from places of danger, the alternative places of refuge should be used to the greatest extent.

WINANT

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Lett. 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

200676

COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

GREAT BRITAIN

POLICY WITH RESPECT TO ISSUANCE OF PALESTINE CERTIFICATES
FOR REFUGEES IN NEUTRAL COUNTRIES

In a letter dated February 12, 1944, The Emergency Committee To Save the Jewish People of Europe asked the British Government to have the Palestine Administration place with the British consuls in Turkey and Spain 10,000 of the 30,000 immigration certificates currently available. It was pointed out that there are definite restrictions on the admittance of Jews into Turkey and Spain; the availability of certificates to Palestine would assure Turkey and Spain that Jewish refugees would be entering those countries only in transit and restrictions on entry might therefore be eased (see attachment #1).

Representatives of the Board conferred with Mr. Hayter of the British Embassy with respect to this problem. In a subsequent letter to the Board Hayter forwarded a copy of a statement the British had forwarded to Secretary Hull on September 9, 1943, disclosing "in strictest confidence" the British position in this matter (see attachments #2 and 3). A copy of this statement of British policy was cabled to Hirschmann, the Board's representative in Turkey, for such use as could be made of it to facilitate the admittance of refugees to Turkey (Cable No. 147 to Ankara dated February 26; see also VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey).

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date, SEP 28 1972

200677

IV C - 1 b
attach. #1

LETTER TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY FROM THE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE TO SAVE
THE JEWISH PEOPLE OF EUROPE

February 12, 1944

The Right Honorable the Viscount Halifax, K. G.,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
The British Embassy,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

Following our telephone conversation this morning, I hasten to give you further details of the specific proposal which we discussed.

We believe it would be most advisable and opportune if the Palestine administration would place some 10,000 - out of the now available 30,000 immigration certificates - with the British Consuls in Turkey and Spain. The British Government could inform the Turkish and Spanish Governments of this action, which might very well result in saving the lives of many Jews who might escape from Nazi-controlled Europe into Turkey or Spain. At present it is not only the Nazis who make it difficult for the Jews to leave. There are also definite restrictions of admittance into Turkey and Spain. The assurance that such escaping Jews will receive certificates to Palestine will assure Turkey and Spain that these people enter their country only in transit and they will thus ease the restrictions on admittance which now prevail.

We feel that if this is done without delay it will do a great deal to help save many thousands of lives. I am under the impression that this proposal does not require any change of the existing policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to Palestine, and I do hope that speedy action in this direction can be taken.

Sincerely yours,

Will Rogers, Jr., M.C.
Co-Chairman

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100178

ATV C-1 b
attach: #2

LETTER FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY TO THE BOARD

February 18, 1944

Dear Mr. Pehle,

With reference to our conversation of February 17th, I enclose for your confidential information a copy of a letter from Sir R. Campbell to Mr. Hull, dated September 9th, 1943, about the position of refugees who escape from Nazi Europe into Turkey and other neutral countries.

The Foreign Office are anxious that in the interest of the refugees themselves this decision should be kept secret, and we were only authorized to disclose it in strictest confidence to Mr. Hull and Mr. Myron Taylor. The United States Ambassador at Ankara has also been informed of the position.

In view of London's emphasis on secrecy I am sure you will realise the importance of treating this information as strictly confidential.

Yours sincerely,

W. G. Hayter

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of British

Govt. telegram, 1-12-72

By RHP Date SEP 28 1972

100679

LETTER FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY TO THE STATE
DEPARTMENT

September 9, 1943

My dear Hull,

I write to let you know that His Majesty's Government recently decided that in future all Jews, whether adults or children, who may succeed in escaping to Turkey from enemy-controlled territory since the closing of the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier in May last, will be eligible (after a preliminary security check in Turkey) for onward transport to Palestine, where they will be placed in camps, go through a further security check and if found satisfactory will be gradually released as legal immigrants into Palestine against the current half-yearly immigration quotas. By "onward transport" is meant such transport by sea or rail as may be arranged by His Majesty's Government in cooperation with the appropriate diplomatic mission.

This policy will also apply to Jews who manage to escape to other neutral countries, but where they have escaped to countries in which they are safe they will normally remain there. Thus the Jews at present in Mauritius, Cyprus, and Spain would remain there (unless, as is hoped, arrangements can be made in the case of Spain to remove them for the duration of hostilities to Allied territory in North Africa) and only in very special cases and for very special reasons would authority be given for any onward transport to Palestine.

The numbers to be admitted under these new proposals will not entail any increase in the total number of immigrants permissible for the period ending the 31st March, 1944.

I have been asked to emphasize the confidential nature of this letter, as secrecy is essential in the interests of the refugees themselves and His Majesty's Government intend to make no public announcement of the policy described above. They are, however, informing the Jewish Agency for Palestine in confidence of what is proposed.

I am writing a similar letter to Mr. Myron Taylor.

Yours sincerely,

R. I. Campbell

DECLASSIFIED

By Authority of British

Gov't. telegram, 1-12-72

By RHP Date SEP 28 1972

100180

COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

GREAT BRITAIN

STATEMENT ON ATROCITIES AGAINST THE JEWS

For an account of developments preceding the issuance in the United States of the President's statement on atrocities against the Jews, see V A - 1, Presidential Statement, and attachments #1 through 4 thereto. Reaffirming its own attitude toward Nazi war crimes and atrocities, the British Government directed that the British Broadcasting Company report the President's statement fully in all languages.

The Board was subsequently advised that on March 30 Anthony Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in response to a question asked in the House of Commons as to whether or not the British Government had any statement to make with reference to the peril threatening Jews in the Balkans, called attention to the wholehearted approval given by His Majesty's Government to the President's statement. Eden made a similar statement on behalf of the British Government. In this declaration Eden noted that the Nazi program of exterminating the Jews has not been halted and repeated Britain's determination to bring those guilty to justice. The satellite governments were warned by Eden that their continued assistance in these persecutions will not be forgotten when Germany is defeated, nor will the people and officials of the satellites who show tolerance and mercy be overlooked. (Cable No. 2647 from London dated March 31; see attachment #1).

The British statement was likewise given wide circulation in broadcasts to enemy and occupied territories and to the satellite countries.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

200181

IV C-1/c
attach. #1

CABLE NO. 2647 FROM LONDON TO THE BOARD

March 31, 1944

In reference to President's statement (Department's telegram 2273, 24th) the following questions and answers in House of Commons March 30th are of interest:

"Mister Silverman (by private notice) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether in view of the recent enemy occupation of Hungary and the rapid march of events in the Balkans he has any statement to make with reference to the urgent and immediate peril which now threatens Jews and other victims of Nazi persecution in these countries.

Mister Eden: Yes, sir. My Honorable Friend will have taken note of the statement made on 24th March by President Roosevelt on the subject of his question and of the fact that His Majesty's Government at once wholeheartedly associated themselves with the United States Government in this matter. Further action is now under discussion between the United States Government and His Majesty's Government and I wish now to take this opportunity of making on behalf of His Majesty's Government the following declaration: Evidence continues to reach His Majesty's Government and Allied Governments that the Nazi policy of extermination has not been halted. The persecution of the Jews has in particular been exemplified by horror and intensity. On this His Majesty's Government in common with their Allies, now that the hour of Germany's defeat grows ever nearer and more certain, can only repeat their detestation of Germany's crimes and their determination that all those guilty of them shall be brought to Justice. But apart from direct guilt there is still indirect participation in crime. Satellite governments who expel citizens to destinations named by Berlin must know that such actions are tantamount to assisting in inhuman persecution of slaughter. This will not be forgotten when the inevitable defeat of the arch enemy of Europe comes about.

Happily there are individuals and even official authorities among the satellites who have resisted the evil German example and have shown toleration and mercy. These things are known to the Allies and in the hope of encouraging such good deeds and increasing their number His Majesty's Government are concerned to make it clear that those who have followed the right path will also not be forgotten in the day of final reckoning. The time of respite is short but there is still opportunity for the merciful to multiply their acts of humanity, for the guilty to

(cont.)

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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try to make amends for their deeds of shame by releasing their victims and making so far as is possible restitution to them. His Majesty's Government are confident that they are expressing the sentiments of all the Allied Governments in calling upon the countries allied with or subject to Germany to join in preventing further persecution and cooperate in protecting and saving the innocent. His Majesty's Government for their part are firmly resolved to continue in cooperation with all Government and private authorities concerned to rescue and maintain so far as lies in their power all those menaced by the Nazi terror.

Mister Silverman: May I while thanking the Right Honorable Gentleman for his full and extremely effective reply add that it makes in my view supplementary questions unnecessary.

Miss Rathbone: Will the Right Honorable Gentleman ensure that the very important statement he has made is given the widest publicity in all enemy and enemy occupied countries and among their satellites and not least among the Slovaks whose attitude has been extremely unsatisfactory so that the message may be read by the people and not only by the Governments, possibly by leaflet as well as by radio.

Mister Eden: Yes, sir."

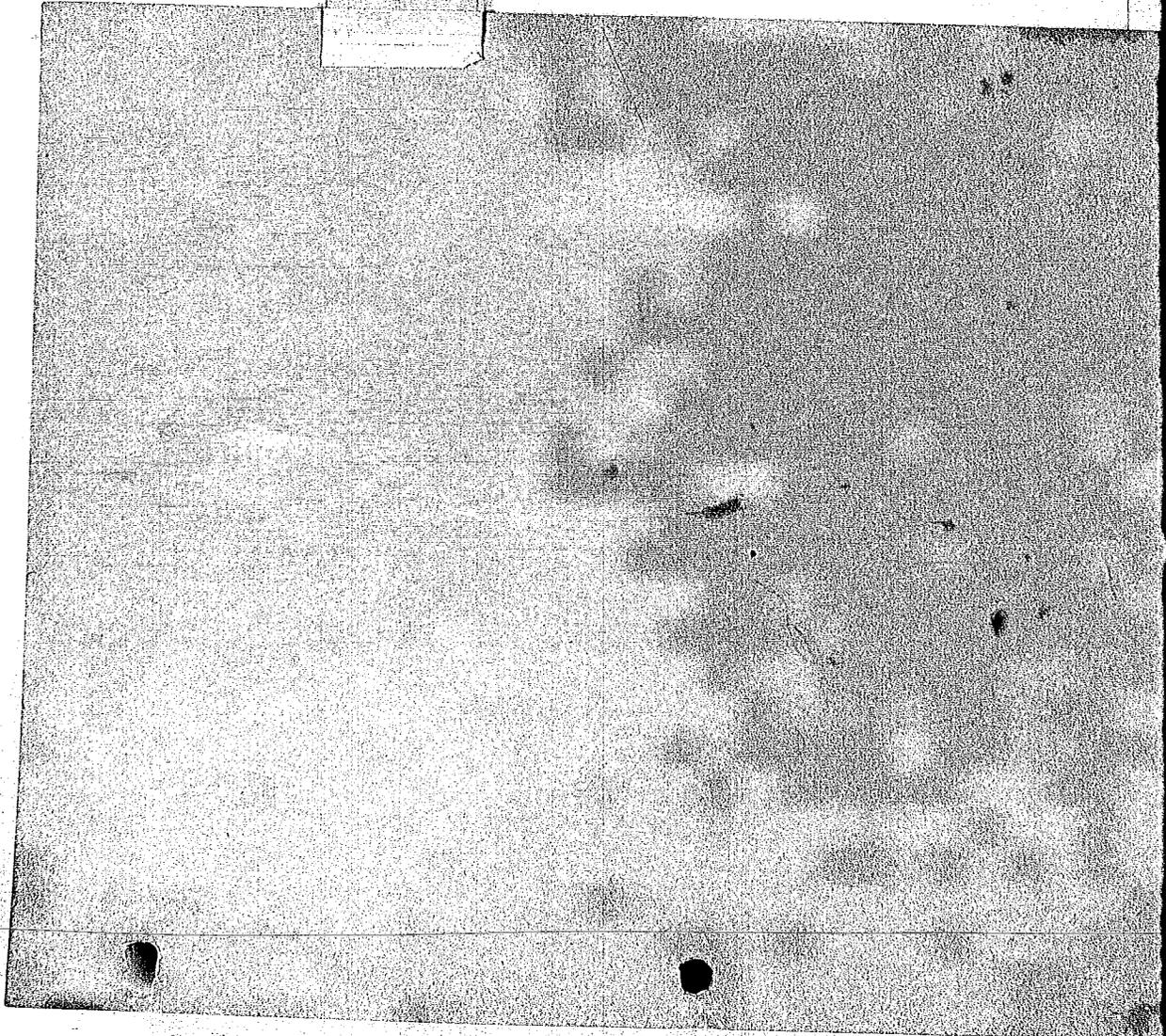
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DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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Coop. Russia



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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

RUSSIA

Early in March a request was dispatched to Ambassador Harriman at Moscow, asking him to solicit the cooperation of the Soviet Government both in general terms and in connection with certain specific projects on which the Board is working (Cables No. 554 and 555 to Moscow dated March 11; see attachments #1 and 2). Harriman in turn indicated that a memorandum on this matter had been handed to Vyshinski. Reference was made in this memorandum to the parallel action which both the United States and the Soviet Union have taken and can take in trying to impress on Germany and the satellite countries the fact that they will be held accountable for inhuman actions against the Jews and other minority groups. Russia was requested to cooperate in the campaign to bring pressure to bear on the governments of the satellite countries, particularly Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, since there are many refugees in those areas in imminent danger of death who might be evacuated to Turkey and other places if those governments permit it. (See Cable No. 1020 to Moscow dated March 24.)

The Soviet reply stated, in substance, that the policy of that government has been, and still is, to aid in every way possible the victims of persecution by Hitlerite Germany (Cable No. 1326 from Moscow dated April 17).

Another report from Moscow stated that, with respect to refugees, Russia was essentially concerned with taking care of her own citizens whom the German invasion had displaced. According to Harriman, the only immigrants likely to receive a welcome in Russia, at least during the war, were persons with a communistic background. (See Cable No. 775 dated March 9 comprising attachment #3.)

Later in March Russia's cooperation was solicited in the attempt to obtain safe-conduct for certain Bulgarian boats which the International Red Cross had reported were immediately available for transporting Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul. (Cable No. 648 to Moscow dated March 21;

(cont.)

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date

SEP 28 1972

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see attachment #4). Harriman in turn advised the Board that the Soviet Foreign Office was prepared to aid in the safe passage of the boats in question as soon as information could be supplied regarding recognition marking of the ships, their courses, and the dates of expected departure and arrival.

In another communication from Harriman the Board was advised that a memorandum was left with Soviet officials requesting safe-conduct for the Turkish ship "Tari" to evacuate refugees from Constanza (Cable No. 935 dated March 20; see attachment #5). Russian safe-conduct was subsequently granted. (See Cable No. 644 from Ankara dated April 11.)

Copies of the President's statement on atrocities against the Jews (see V A - 1) were made available to the appropriate Soviet officials (Cable No. 699 to Moscow dated March 24). The Board was later advised by Harriman that he spoke with Vyshinski about the President's statement and solicited Soviet cooperation with the Board's psychological program. Vyshinski asserted that the views of the Soviet Government in this matter were well known. He indicated that sympathetic consideration was being given to Harriman's previous request for cooperation from his government. (In this connection see Cable No. 1083 from Moscow dated March 28.)

Harriman was subsequently asked to approach appropriate authorities of the Soviet Union in an effort to ascertain whether, in view of the positive action recently taken by both the United States and British Governments in reiterating their attitude toward Nazi war crimes and atrocities, the Soviet Government would take similar action. The Board indicated its belief that such a statement on the part of the U. S. S. R. would have a profound effect upon the leaders and people of Rumania and Hungary. (See Cable No. 937 to Moscow dated April 17.)

Harriman therefore addressed a letter to Vyshinski, communicating the text of the stirring appeal addressed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to the Hungarian people and renewing the Board's request that the Soviet Government issue a statement comparable to the President's declaration. This letter also requested that Soviet radio stations broadcast appropriate messages to Germany and the satellite countries and that leaflets be issued to supplement any such broadcasts (Cable No. 2152 from Moscow dated June 14).
2142

Harriman next reported having discussed with Vyshinski the general question of the relief and rescue of victims of enemy persecution, as well as the President's recent action in setting up an Emergency Refugee Shelter in this country. Harriman pointed out that American public opinion has been very much concerned over the appalling reports that have

(cont.)

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Order, 1-11-72
By H. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

200686

been received concerning the persecution of Jews in Europe, and inquired as to whether there was any concrete action that the Soviet Government could take in this respect.

Vyshinski replied that the same reports had come to the attention of the Soviet Government. It was stated that active study was being given to the entire matter, including the proposals set forth in a recent letter from the Embassy (Cables No. 2179 and 2180 from Moscow dated June 19).

See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives.

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

700187

CABLE NO. 554 TO MOSCOW FROM THE BOARD

March 11, 1944

Not paraphrased.

Our circular airgram of January 26 described the functions of the War Refugee Board, composed of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War. This Board has been established by the President to take action for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jewish people of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution.

The Board is actively engaged in carrying out the policy of this Government as announced by the President, and is seeking the cooperation of all members of the United Nations in this tremendous task.

The Board is fully conscious of the great work which the Soviet Government has done to date in saving the lives of untold numbers of refugees, including Jews, from Hitler who were rescued in the midst of battle from the jaws of the German army. At the same time the Board is convinced that if it could secure the cooperation of the Soviet Government in some of the projects on which this Government is working, the chances of saving many people from death would be greatly increased. In view of the outstanding record of the Soviet Government in this whole matter we are not suggesting that pressure be put on them to do more than they are now doing. We feel, however, that if the Soviet Government can be convinced of the fact that we are sincerely determined to do what we can to prevent the murder of the Jews and other persecuted peoples by Hitler, they may be prepared to cooperate in some of the programs which we have under consideration.

There are many ways in which the Soviet Government might be of assistance in connection with these programs. The representative of the War Refugee Board in Turkey, Ira Hirschmann, at the suggestion of Ambassador Steinhardt, has already discussed two specific problems with Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov in Turkey. Vinogradov was informed of our intention to exert pressure on Bulgaria and other satellite countries and was requested to take parallel action. Vinogradov was also informed of our efforts to get the Turkish Government to give permission for the use of a ship for evacuating refugees and was asked to support our request. Although Vinogradov agreed to speak to the Bulgarian Minister informally, he pointed out that on both of these matters he could not act formally except through Moscow. Vinogradov suggested that you should request the assistance of his Government on these two problems and he agreed to do likewise.

(cont.)

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100188

We feel that it is very important that you discuss this whole matter with the Soviet Government immediately. You should make clear the policy of this Government and discuss frankly the problems with which we are faced.

The following information concerning some of the things we are working on and some of the obstacles we have encountered is furnished for your information and use in connection with your discussions with the Soviet Government:

The War Refugee Board is convinced that it is of utmost importance to undertake at once an organized and concentrated effort to make clear, by all appropriate means, to all Axis satellites that the Allied Governments view in a most serious light their assistance in any form to Hitler's program to exterminate the Jews, and other similar groups, regarding all such action as criminal participation in organized murder. The Board also believes it necessary to make clear to the satellites by all possible means, its intention to do everything in its power to rescue such unfortunates who are in danger of death, in order not only to give the satellites a clear view of the attitude of this country in the matter, but also of the opportunities which exist for assisting in the execution of our policy. The Board feels very strongly that a campaign of this kind must be made through all possible channels and be constantly repeated at every available opportunity. The Board believes that parallel action on the part of other Allied Governments would do a great deal to assure the success of this endeavor. At the moment it is important that pressure be brought to bear particularly on Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, because in those areas there are many refugees in imminent danger of death who can be evacuated to Turkey and other places if those Governments permit it.

In addition to bringing pressure to bear through various channels on the governments of the satellite countries, the Board feels that there should be employed in this campaign all available means for effecting the widest dissemination of our attitude not only to the governments themselves but to the largest number possible of the people of satellite countries. In this connection the Office of War Information is cooperating with the War Refugee Board in bringing home to the people in Germany and the satellite countries the fact that we consider this matter to be of paramount importance and intend vigorously to pursue all possible means of accomplishing our objective.

This cable has been repeated to Ambassador Steinhardt at Ankara.

HULL

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100189

CABLE NO. 555 TO MOSCOW FROM THE BOARD

March 11, 1944

War Refugee Board sends the following for the Ambassador's attention.

The following message immediately follows the Department's previous cable on the subject dated March 11.

In addition to the proposed plan designed to effect a change in the attitude as well as the actions of our enemies, the Board is convinced that there is an opportunity for actually moving many of these refugees out of enemy controlled areas. The Board believes that in the localities close to Turkey and the Black Sea there exists one of the most promising opportunities for actually accomplishing the rescue of such people. It is known that there are considerable numbers of refugees in Rumania, Bulgaria and Transnistria. It seems possible that arrangements can be made with the Turkish Government to receive refugees from these localities. Furthermore it appears possible that the Rumanian Government will grant to a substantial number of these persons permission to leave Rumania. The need for immediate means of transportation is imperative.

The Board is trying to arrange for a small Turkish vessel to proceed to Constanza in order to evacuate about 1,000 children from Constanza to Turkey. The Board's representative in Turkey has reported that if we would offer a guaranty to the Turkish Government that the ship would be replaced if it were lost there might be a possibility of chartering the S. S. Vatan, a small Turkish ship. Our Government promptly offered such a guaranty. It is hoped the Russian Government may be of some assistance in our negotiations with the Government of Turkey. Also the possibility of using Swedish ships for this purpose is the subject of negotiations between this Government and the Government of Sweden. During the discussions with the Soviet Government you are requested to keep in mind that this problem of transportation seems to be the key to evacuation in the Black Sea area.

One of the functions of the Board is the finding of places of temporary havens of refuge to which persons now in enemy dominated European countries may be moved. The cooperation of the Governments of Spain and Turkey depends upon our ability to move refugees coming into those countries to other places as quickly as possible.

(Cont.)

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100290

Preparations have been made to move refugees now in Spain to a camp which has been established in North Africa in order to facilitate the entry of additional refugees into Spain.

Refugees are entering Palestine by the way of Turkey. The Government of Turkey has been requested to relax its border and other controls and in other ways increase the flow of refugees from occupied territories through Turkey. The Board is offering to finance the establishment of reception camps to accommodate refugees entering Turkey and the Board would arrange for their transportation to other places as quickly as possible.

It seems to the Board that it would be necessary to find at least temporary places of refuge in a number of places if the evacuation of a substantial number of refugees can be effected as is planned. It appears from negotiations with the Swiss Government that Switzerland will now accept refugee children if a guarantee can be given that they will be removed after the war. We are making every effort to provide Switzerland with assurances which will meet her requirements.

It would greatly increase the possibility of evacuating large numbers of refugees if the Soviet Government were prepared immediately to take refugees, Jews and non-Jews, who manage to reach neutral countries from enemy controlled territories and who could be given at least a temporary refuge in the Soviet Union after being transported across the Black Sea from the Balkan countries. If the Soviet Government would give assurances that she would take refugees from those countries after the end of the war, Switzerland and other countries might possibly give more favorable consideration to taking refugees now. You should make every attempt in your negotiations with the Soviets to obtain their complete cooperation if it seems that they would be willing to accept such refugees even on a temporary basis.

From the foregoing, particularly taking into consideration the time and physical factor to be contended with, you can understand that a number of the obstacles which we are encountering could be solved with the Soviet Government's aid. If you will give personal and prompt attention to this matter it will be greatly appreciated.

The foregoing message has been repeated to Ankara for Ambassador Steinhardt.

HULL

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. 11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100691

IVC - 2
attach.#3

CABLE NO. 775 FROM MOSCOW TO THE BOARD

March 9, 1944

The following message refers to circular airgram dated January 26, 1944, 7 p.m., from the Department.

There are no private or public agencies in Russia which are active in bringing war refugees into the country so far as the Embassy can find out. The enormous refugee problem of taking care of the millions of Soviet citizens whom the German invasion displaced is the one with which Russia is essentially concerned.

The relief of the Jews and the Poles whom the Government of the U. S. S. R. sent to Siberia and Central Asia from the portion of eastern Poland which the Russian forces occupied in 1940 is another of their problems. The breaking of diplomatic relations between Poland and Russia has complicated this problem. The Australian Legation which represents Polish interests in the U. S. S. R. has been able to secure exit visas for only a very few although many of the persons mentioned above would like to get out of Russia.

Steps to repatriate Russian war refugees from North Africa were taken by the Government of the U. S. S. R. you may remember.

The only immigrants who are likely to receive a welcome here during the period of the war at least, would be persons with a Communist background and entrance into the country in all probability would be desired by very few others.

I do not believe it would be advisable under these circumstances to approach the Government of the U. S. S. R. on this subject unless in developing our own specific plan of action we find that for its execution we need the cooperation of Russia.

HARRIMAN

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100192

IV C - 2
attach. # 4

CABLE NO. 648 TO MOSCOW FROM THE BOARD

March 21, 1944

Informed by International Red Cross that Bulgarian boats "Bellacitta," "Milka," "Maritza", immediately available for transportation Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul. Stop Red Cross has requested safe conducts. Stop. Please try to obtain Soviet safe conducts and inform Red Cross Geneva and Ambassador Steinhardt as well as War Refugee Board.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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IV C - 2
attach. # 4

CABLE NO. 648 TO MOSCOW FROM THE BOARD

March 21, 1944

Informed by International Red Cross that Bulgarian boats "Bellacitta," "Milka," "Maritza", immediately available for transportation Jewish refugees from Mangalia to Istanbul Stop Red Cross has requested safe conducts Stop Please try to obtain Soviet safe conducts and inform Red Cross Geneva and Ambassador Steinhardt as well as War Refugee Board.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-7-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100694

IV C. - 2
attach. #5

CABLE NO. 935 FROM MOSCOW TO THE BOARD

March 20, 1944

The following is a personal message for the Ambassador.

Last night I spoke to Molotov and left with him a memorandum requesting prompt action on the matter of safe conduct for the Turkish ship TARI as described in your cable of March 16 to evacuate refugees from Constanza. Also I mentioned to him our Government's deep interest in the subject. I was told by him that the matter would be given prompt consideration.

The above message has been sent to Ankara.

HARRIMAN

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

700695

COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

POLISH GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

Ambassador Winant reported from London that officials dealing with refugee problems for the Governments-in-Exile of Norway, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, and Belgium were informed of the Board's policy as outlined and in all cases signified their desire to cooperate to the fullest possible extent. In addition to noting certain measures whose importance was stressed by these governments-in-exile, Winant advised that fuller reports on persecuted minorities now living in areas under German control, along with suggested plans of action, were being transmitted by air mail (Cable No. 30 from London dated March 1).

The Board has since been advised by Charge d'Affaires Schoenfeld, who is accredited to the various governments-in-exile in London, of the substance of conversations he had with Count Czapski, Deputy Secretary General and Head of the Refugee Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Czapski is said to be in full accord with the policy set forth in the Board's Executive Order and indicated that the Board would receive the fullest possible cooperation from his government. He stated that because of the great number of Poles held in concentration camps by the Germans, the small percentage who do manage to escape makes up a considerable number of people. He mentioned as the principal obstacles interfering with the rescue and relief of Nazi victims the failure of some of the governments of the countries where the victims attempt to find refuge to give sufficient cooperation, the problem of passports, the matter of obtaining necessary funds, and the visa problem. He felt that an important thing to be done immediately was to provide more passports entitling Polish refugees in Switzerland to go to South America. Czapski stated that the most helpful measures this Government could take for the rescue and relief of refugees would be to intercede with the governments of those countries in which the United States is represented to assist with the passport and visa problem, and to permit funds to be transferred from this country to Europe for relief and rescue work. Two memoranda prepared by the European Division of the World Jewish Congress dealing with the Jewish minority in Poland were also submitted by Schoenfeld.

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There was subsequently forwarded from London a copy of a declaration issued by the Polish Government and approved by the Council of Ministers, in which full support was pledged to every endeavor made by the United States in connection with the rescue and relief of refugees (Dispatch No. 599 from London dated May 23).

For an account of dealing with the Australian Government concerning the admission of a small group of Poles from Russia, see IV C - 9, Cooperation with Australia.

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NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

Another report from Charge d'Affaires Schoenfeld refers to conversations with Dr. Alf Seweriin, who is in charge of refugee matters for the Norwegian Government-in-Exile. Dr. Seweriin stated that this Government's refugee policy has the full sympathy of the Norwegian authorities and that they would cooperate in every way possible. He stated that there was no difficulty in the way of Norwegians escaping to Sweden once they reached the frontier. The chief obstacle in achieving their escape lies in their inability to move about within Norway. According to Dr. Seweriin, approximately 24,000 Norwegians have thus far escaped to Sweden; another 2,000 have escaped to the United Kingdom and other areas. Practically all of the Jewish population of Norway, amounting to about 870, was deported to Poland; and the Norwegian Government has no knowledge of their fate. The report also states that between 6,000 and 8,000 Norwegians are now in Germany; 2,000 of these are being held as prisoners of war, while the remainder are being held in concentration camps or are in prison as the result of courts martial.

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NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

A report was received from Charge d'Affaires Schoenfeld in London indicating the substance of a conversation with Dr. W. Huender, Head of the Bureau of Post-War Problems in the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dr. Huender is reported to have indicated that Dutch authorities are in agreement with the policy of the President's Executive Order and will be glad to support any action which may be originated by the Board. It was stated that, of the 180,000 Jews originally living in Holland, about 140,000 have been deported to Poland; there are now only about 8,000 Jews, recognized as such still left in Holland. The remaining 32,000 have just dropped out of sight. It is thought that some may have found refuge in France or made their way to Switzerland, but most of them are probably still living in Holland in concealment with the help of the non-Jewish population.

With reference to Jewish victims, Dr. Huender said that those Jews in Holland who had been provided with a Palestine certificate are in a relatively better position than other Jews, since the possession of such a certificate may assist the holder to avoid being sent to a concentration camp. He thought therefore that it would be helpful if it were possible to provide more of these certificates. Likewise, it would assist in keeping some Jews out of the concentration camps if more passports to South American countries could be provided.

Discussing the question as to whether any instances were known where refugees have been turned back at the borders of neutral countries, Dr. Huender said that some instances were known to the Dutch authorities -- Switzerland, for example -- but for the most part he felt that neutral countries, while they have not actively encouraged escape across their borders, have not put any special obstacles in the way. (See Dispatch No. 127 from London dated March 6).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

BELGIAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

Charge d'Affaires Schoenfeld has reported from London the substance of his conversation and correspondence with Monsieur A. Delierneux, Chief of Cabinet in the Belgian Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare. M. Delierneux stated that although it was in general very difficult for refugees to escape from Belgium, nevertheless every few weeks a small number of people do manage to get through to England, France, and Spain.

As to possible opportunities for special action by the U. S. Government to facilitate the rescue of Nazi victims, M. Delierneux referred to the lack of cooperation from local Spanish authorities on the French-Spanish frontier and suggested that as far as Belgian refugees are concerned, intervention with the Spanish Government to try to bring about some change in this situation would be of value. Later he observed that from the Belgian point of view perhaps the most effective single action that could be taken would be to insure in some way that the Spanish borders were less efficiently controlled. There had been cases, M. Delierneux said, where Belgian refugees were turned back at the Spanish borders, and up to a few months ago those who were able to reach Spanish soil were arrested and interned during long months under the worst conditions. It was said that at the present time, however, the situation is improving and the Spanish authorities are no longer so apt to put people into internment camps, although they still do not encourage or cooperate actively in the entry of refugees into Spain. (See Dispatch No. 109 from London dated March 4).

In a communication from Minister Norweb in Portugal the Board was asked to approach the Belgian Government-in-Exile with the request that instructions be issued to its Legation in Lisbon to facilitate cooperation on the part of representatives of the Belgian Convention in rescuing adults and children from occupied territory (Cable No. 1292 from Lisbon dated April 28). The Board therefore cabled Charge d'Affaires

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Schoenfeld in London, asking that representations be made to the Belgian Government-in-Exile on the matter (Cable No. 3735 to London dated May 10).

According to word subsequently received through the U. S. Embassy in London, although the Belgian Government-in-Exile had already instructed all Belgian missions to cooperate fully in this Government's refugee rescue and relief operations, the Belgian Foreign Office indicated that it would again communicate with its Legation at Lisbon in order to insure complete cooperation on the part of the Belgian convention there in connection with the evacuation to Portugal of refugees from occupied territories (Cable No. Belge 5 from London dated May 15; see VI B, Evacuation to and through Spain and Portugal).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

In February Counselor Chapin of the U. S. Consulate in Algiers advised the Board that a spokesman for the French Committee of National Liberation had indicated that the Committee would gladly associate itself with the relief and rescue work with which the Board is concerned. Chapin reported that, at the same time, the spokesman pointed out that one of the chief preoccupations of the Committee was, of necessity, the problem of refugees from France and the general displacement of French nationals.

Chapin also enclosed a memorandum prepared by a military attache of the Consulate, summarizing the refugee situation in North Africa. According to this report, the refugee problem in North Africa began as far back as the early part of 1939, when thousands of Spanish Republicans came across the border from Spanish Morocco. It was stated that most of these Spanish refugees have now been incorporated, at least temporarily, in one way or another, into the economy of North Africa, working either for French industry or for the Allied Armies.

For the miscellaneous refugees who need charitable assistance, it was reported that there have been established in principal centers — i.e., Algiers, Casablanca, Oran, and Tunis — amicales or mutual aid societies under the auspices of the Joint Commission for Political Prisoners and Refugees in French North Africa. These societies have been receiving funds from the United States under Treasury licenses to help needy Spanish refugees.

There is also said to be in North Africa a group of stateless refugees, the greatest part of whom are Jewish and of German or Austrian origin. It was estimated that there are perhaps 5,000 persons in this group in all of North Africa. Some of these people had served in the French army during the war and had been interned following the fall of France. They were later transferred to internment camps in North Africa and were subsequently released after the Allied landings, largely through the activities of the

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Joint Commission. Since that time most of these people have secured employment with the American or British armies, and approximately 900 of them are enlisted in the British Pioneer Corps. Early in 1944 a group of about 125 of these persons were sent to Palestine through the efforts of the Joint Distribution Committee. The small number of persons in this stateless group who are unemployable are being maintained through funds made available by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Another group of refugees in North Africa, most of them Jewish, are said to have come from Libya, having been expelled by the Italians in 1940 by virtue of the fact that they were French subjects. Of the 2,500 persons in this group, approximately 2,000 have been living in Tunisia under the most primitive conditions, the rest being scattered throughout the back country in Algeria.

By and large, according to this report, the French Committee of National Liberation has neither encouraged nor discouraged the entrance of displaced persons but rather has put the whole question on the individual case basis, the real decisions being made by American, British and French military security officers, working in cooperation.

Chapin suggested that in order to encourage the French Committee to allow displaced persons to enter North Africa more freely, a plan under which probable ultimate destinations could be indicated would be necessary.

Inasmuch as the Mexican Government has reportedly offered to accept immigrants from the Spanish refugee community in North Africa, it was stated that French authorities would be more willing to receive additional refugees in French North Africa if this Spanish refugee emigration project were carried through as soon as possible. Lists of those who have expressed a desire to go are reported to have been sent to Mexico City through U. S. State Department channels for consideration by the Mexican Government. (In this connection see VI H - 3, Permanent Resettlement in Other Countries.)

If similar arrangements for certain refugees could be arranged with other countries, the attitude of the French Committee of National Liberation would probably be correspondingly more receptive to additional refugees, Chapin concluded. (See Dispatch No. 122 from Algiers dated February 22.)

Another dispatch from Algiers indicated that the question of the issuance of special instructions by the French Committee to implement cooperation with this Government on war refugee matters was disclosed with a French official. The issuance of a declaration of policy similar

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to that contained in the Executive Order creating the Board was reported to be under consideration. (Dispatch No. 169 from Algiers dated March 14).

With respect to the President's statement on atrocities against the Jews, Leonard Ackermann, the Board's Special Representative in the Mediterranean Area, has reported widespread publicity, both in the press and over the radio, through the Office of War Information at Algiers. Parts of the statement were repeated in French, German, Italian, and English on the United Nations' radio, and favorable comment was obtained from prominent French officials. (Cables No. 1018 and 1244 from Algiers dated March 28 and April 14; see also V A - 1, Presidential Statement).

In June Ambassador Robert Murphy and Ackermann were requested to bring to the attention of the French Committee the action taken by the President in setting up an Emergency Refugee Shelter in this country (see VI G, Temporary Havens in the United States). Murphy and Ackermann are to explore carefully with the French Committee all possible means by which refugee facilities in the Mediterranean area might be increased. (Cable No. 1879 to Algiers dated June 14).

See VI B - 3, Evacuations from Spain to Lyautey, for a detailed account of the evacuations now in process of refugees from Spain to Camp Lyautey near Fedhala.

See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

CANADA

On February 11 there was forwarded to the Board from the Canadian Embassy a copy of the statement on refugees made to the press in July 1943 by the Canadian Minister of Mines and Resources. In addition to nothing certain changes effected in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee, to which the Canadian Government had given its consent, this statement indicated that a further movement of political, religious, and racial refugees then in Spain and Portugal was being facilitated by means of the re-opening in Lisbon of an office of the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, through which the necessary visas could be issued.

A communication from the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa dated February 15 relates the substance of a conversation with Mr. R. A. Robertson of the Canadian Department of External Affairs. Mr. Robertson said that in 1940 approximately 4,000 refugees were admitted to Canada from the United Kingdom, many of these being classified as dangerous. About 1,000 of these have since left Canada and about 2,000 have been interned, leaving only approximately 900 who are at liberty in Canada. Only a trickle of refugees reached Canada in 1941 and 1942. Mr. Robertson referred to the fact that last October Canada sent an Immigration Agent to Lisbon with authority to admit an initial group of 200 families (a figure not for publication). It was subsequently reported that there seemed to be only 600 or so refugees in the Iberian Peninsula who desired to leave and it was therefore doubtful whether Canada would be able to find as many as 200 families."

In another communication from the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, in response to the State Department's circular airgram of February 29, the Board was advised that a statement is expected to be made in the Canadian House of Commons on the entire refugee question, probably within the next six weeks (Airgram No. A-9 dated March 11).

A report from the U. S. Consul General in Toronto in response to State's original circular airgram indicated that, while no specific cases of discrimination against Jews in the matter of immigration have been

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brought to the attention of the Consulate, according to a representative of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society in Toronto, Canada's restrictive immigration policy is more rigidly enforced in the case of persons of Jewish extraction than in the case of any other race admitted to that country (Dispatch No. 1490 from Toronto dated March 17).

A reply was subsequently received from the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, in response to a note sent by the U. S. Legation there outlining the position of this Government on the subject of aid to war refugees. This reply called attention to the declaration of policy made by the Canadian Prime Minister on July 9, 1943, and reviewed the steps taken by the Canadian Government in that direction. It also requested that consideration be given by the United States to permitting the entry into this country of 900 refugees now in Canada, who had been sent to that country from the United Kingdom and who are anxious to proceed to the United States because of the presence here of relatives or close friends. (See Dispatch No. 835 from Ottawa dated March 18.)

In an effort to obtain action by the Canadian Government parallel to that taken by this Government, the Board has recently cabled the U. S. Legation at Ottawa asking that appropriate officials of the Canadian Government be advised of the instructions issued to U. S. consular offices in Switzerland, authorizing the issuance of 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children arriving in that country from France. It was suggested that the Canadian Government take similar steps with respect to 1,000 children, Canada having previously expressed to the Intergovernmental Committee its willingness to accept such a group of child refugees. (In this connection see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France; see also VI B - 2, Evacuation of Children from France to Spain and Portugal.)

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

AUSTRALIA

Minister Johnson, in response to State's circular airgram of January 26, reports little interest on the part of the Australian Government in the problem of rescuing or assisting refugees (this despite Australia's membership on the Intergovernmental Committee). Johnson's report does indicate, however, that the Australian Government proposes to admit 150 Jewish children from Switzerland. This 150 is in addition to a like number for whom permission was granted over a year ago but who have not been able to get to Australia. The children are to be the full responsibility of the Australian Jewish Welfare Association which, with its associates in Great Britain, made the arrangements for their admission. The children have been or are to be admitted to Switzerland from France, on the promise of the Australian Government to grant them entry when transportation can be found. (In this connection see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France.)

Johnson also reported that some time ago the Australian Government agreed to admit a small group of Poles from Russia on the understanding, apparently unwritten, that Poland would repatriate these persons after the war, paying all expenses. The arrangements for these persons are said to have been made by the Polish Consul General in Sydney. The Poles are supposed to have reached Iran, but nothing further is known of the matter. (See Airgram No. A-6 received February 26.)

In a cable to Canberra the Board subsequently requested that appropriate Australian officials be advised of the necessity of giving assurances to neutral countries contiguous to occupied Europe, that refugees accepted by such countries and who do not return to their homes after the war will be admitted as immigrants to other countries. Minister Johnson was asked to point out to the Australian Government the steps that have been taken by this Government with respect to the issuance of 5,000 visas for children arriving in Switzerland and Spain from France. It was also requested that inquiry be made as to whether the Australian Government will take parallel action in order to induce these neutral countries to

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accept additional refugees from Axis territory. (See Cable No. 40 dated April 12.)

According to another report from Canberra the U. S. Legation there has sent a formal note to the Australian Minister for External Affairs, stressing the urgency of the refugee question and asking for Australian cooperation. A reply stating the position of the Australian Government has been promised at an early date (Cable No. 48 from Canberra dated April 21).

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INDIA

Consul General Patton has reported from Calcutta that there are no destitute Jews or other persecuted minorities from Europe asyلمed in that consular district, nor is it considered a suitable location for refugees because of the famine of 1943, its aftermath of epidemics of such contagious and infectious diseases as smallpox, cholera, and malaria, and the possibility of a similar situation during 1944 (Airgram No. A-26 dated February 23).

A report received from the U. S. Mission at New Delhi indicates that India has accepted the invitation to become a member of the Intergovernmental Committee, subject to approval by its Legislative Assembly (Dispatch No. 394 dated March 23).

The Board was subsequently advised of the receipt of a reply from the Indian Government in response to the Mission's note requesting cooperation in war refugee matters. India's refugee problem, according to this reply, is "probably greater than that of any other allied or neutral country." An official statement accompanying the reply indicated that in addition to some 500,000 evacuees from British colonies in southeast Asia and from China, an estimated 3500 Poles and a scattering of Europeans of various other nationalities have been given refuge in India since the outbreak of hostilities. The Indian reply pointed to the possibility of a "further liability for 8,000 additional Poles." It also suggested that the advance of the Allied armies into Burma may well result in a renewed flow of refugees from Burma into India. "In the light of the present food and accommodation problems and the general economic situation" the Indian Government concluded that it is not in a position to accept more war refugees (Dispatch No. 404 from New Delhi dated March 30).

In a later communication from the U. S. Mission in New Delhi it was suggested that in view of the statement previously forwarded, it would be inappropriate at the moment to propose that India now issue

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a declaration of policy similar to that made by this Government upon the creation of the Board. Instead, it was proposed that inquiry might be made as to whether, in case the suggested liability for 8,000 Poles should not materialize, India would be prepared to accommodate a comparable number of other European refugees (Dispatch No. 426 from New Delhi dated April 10).

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IRAQ

Minister Henderson reports (Airgram No. A-8 dated February 18) that "so far as the Legation has been able to ascertain no Jewish or other refugees from Nazi persecution desire or have desired to find a refuge or to establish a domicile in this country. The only refugee problem which has faced Iraq, therefore, has been that of refugees in transit. The Iraqi Government has in general pursued a policy of permitting these refugees to pass through the country unless they happened to be Jews traveling to Palestine to settle there...

"The considerations which prompt the Iraqi Government to refuse visas to Jewish refugees bound for Palestine appear to be based on national policies of so vital a nature that in my opinion no approaches of the character suggested...would alter them. The main objective of Iraqi foreign policy is to promote closer Arab cooperation with a view to the formation in the not distant future of some kind of a union of Arab states in this area. The Iraqi Government is convinced that if the Zionists are able to achieve their goal of setting up a National Jewish State in Palestine this objective cannot be accomplished and that the success of the Zionist program would mean the non-realization of Arab hopes for the future ... It is believed that unless backed by foreign armed forces it would be almost impossible for any Government to survive in Iraq just now which would take steps to facilitate the travel of Jewish settlers to Palestine, and it would be difficult to convince local Arabs that Jewish refugees bound for Palestine will not eventually settle there."

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

GREEK GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

Memoranda dealing with the present status of Jews in Greece have been forwarded to the Board from the American Consul General in Istanbul (Dispatches No. 2458 and 2680 dated February 19 and March 18). Another report from the Consul General deals with the escape of refugees from Greece through Izmir (Smyrna), Turkey, including a review of the movement since the occupation of Greece (Dispatch No. 2628 from Istanbul, undated).

According to a report from the U. S. Legation in Cairo, the Greek Government-in-Exile in Cairo has issued a declaration stating that it fully shares the views and feelings expressed in the President's recent statement on atrocities against the Jews and requesting all Greeks to assist in the escape, to neutral or free countries, of Jews and other victims of Nazi tyranny. OWI and the Greek Government-in-Exile were reported to be planning to broadcast the statement to Greece and also to publicize it in the local and foreign press (Dispatches No. 94 and 95 from Cairo dated March 29 and 30).

A memorandum left by the Royal Hellenic Government with the Legation in Cairo stresses the great hunger and other hardships visited upon the Greek people as a result of German occupation. The memorandum also points out that persons in danger can escape from Greece with relative ease because of that country's geographical position. (In this connection see Dispatches No. 86 and 90 from Cairo dated April 3 and April 7.)

In a recent report from the American Consul General in Istanbul the Board was advised that the task of rescuing many hundreds of Jews in Greece now threatened with deportation and death is primarily a question of organization and financial support. The Consul General has been asked to develop in greater detail his suggestions for the evacuation of Greek Jews and non-Greek refugees in cooperation with local patriots and Allied escape services operating in that area. The Board has also indicated that it believes it possible to arrange for the necessary funds and assistance (Cable No. 257 to Istanbul dated April 26).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

YUGOSLAVIA

Through Ambassador MacVeagh in Cairo the Board has been advised of a communication from the Royal Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which agreement was expressed with the refugee policy of this Government. It was stated that Yugoslav diplomatic representatives and other organizations have received instructions to give all possible aid to Allied and international bodies concerned with war refugee questions (Airgram No. A-19 from Cairo dated May 19).

Messages have been relayed to Marshal Tito of the Yugoslav Partisans soliciting advice and active aid in connection with two projects involving the rescue of refugees. The first instance related to the rescue of an estimated 1500 refugees on an island in the Adriatic (see VI E - 1, Evacuation of Refugees from the Island of Rab).

In the second case, the British Foreign Office was reported to have instructed its Yugoslavian Embassy in Cairo to approach Tito with a view to his facilitating the escape of refugees from Axis-held countries through Partisan territory. Ackermann, the Board's Special Representative in the Mediterranean Area, had previously pointed out the great potentialities with respect to the rescue of refugees in and through Partisan territory, and James Saxon, another Board Representative in that area, had been sent to Italy to obtain more detailed information on this score (see IV F - 5, Italy; see also VI E - 7, Evacuations to Italy and the Mediterranean Area).

See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

NEW ZEALAND

In response to State's circular airgram the U.S. Legation in Wellington reported the receipt of a note from the Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs stating that the policy of the New Zealand Government with respect to refugees "has been and continues to be one of affording these people the maximum possible assistance consistent with the resources and the security of the Dominion."

In the granting of immigration permits during recent years, the Prime Minister stated, New Zealand has looked sympathetically on the applications of persons suffering persecution or displaced from their countries or residences. It was estimated that between 1933 and 1941 the total number of immigration permits issued was in excess of 3,700, including permits for nearly 500 Chinese refugee women and children. This total does not include evacuees from Pacific territories afforded hospitality in New Zealand, who were estimated to number between 500 and 600; nor does it include some 65 Poles from Japan to whom New Zealand agreed to give temporary refuge. The granting of permits since 1941 has, of course, been affected by the spread of the war in the Pacific, but it was indicated that within recent months New Zealand has agreed to receive and provide accommodations for up to 700 Polish refugee children from the Middle East. (See Airgram No. A-30 from Wellington dated March 9.)

In May the Board was advised by the U.S. Legation in New Zealand of the appearance in a Wellington newspaper of an editorial describing the concern expressed by returning servicemen over the acquisition of professional, business, and industrial undertakings by alien residents of New Zealand. The editorial is said to have urged investigation on a national scale of the extent and effect of alien infiltration.

Another Wellington news story reported by the Legation dealt with statements made by the Prime Minister of New Zealand on the matter of post-war immigration. The Prime Minister is said to have reiterated his belief that while the rehabilitation of her fighting men must be New Zealand's first consideration, immigrants will be needed and welcomed in New Zealand after the war. A well-planned scheme of immigration was urged, with priority to immigrants from Great Britain and then perhaps to people of other Allied nations. (See Dispatch No. 339 from Wellington dated May 10.)

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

SOUTH AFRICA

In response to State's circular airgram of January 26, the Board was advised early in March by the U. S. Legation in the Union of South Africa that no official reply had thus far been received from the South African Government with respect to possible cooperation in war refugee matters. The question of post-war immigration into the Union had meanwhile been raised in the South African House of Assembly, however, in a motion introduced by a majority party member calling for large-scale European immigration, to which an amendment was added specifically barring Jews. Such a restriction was said to be favored by the majority of both leading political parties. Another amendment provided for the immigration of orphans under ten years of age "from countries from which the people of the Union have sprung." Debate on the proposed legislation was reported to be in progress (Dispatch No. 483 from Capetown dated March 11).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

CHINA

According to reports transmitted from diplomatic and consular officers in Kuming, Sian, and Chengtu, the official attitude of the Chinese toward the entry of war refugees is generally negative. In view of the tremendous relief problems faced by the Chinese Government with respect to its own homeless and destitute peoples, it is considered doubtful if the Chinese reaction would be favorable to any concrete proposal involving the acceptance and care of substantial numbers of refugees. Moreover, transportation facilities into unoccupied China are said to be so limited that any refugee traffic would probably interfere seriously with the importation of essential materials. However, so far as is known, there is no specific bar to the entry of Jews and other war refugees from Japanese-occupied areas into unoccupied China, nor have any cases been reported of the turning back of such refugees at the borders.

It was stated that no Jewish problem exists in any form in China. The condition of refugees generally in both occupied and unoccupied China is reported to be serious, but not more so than that of the Chinese themselves. There is said to be no evidence that the Japanese deliberately maltreat refugees in occupied areas, a statement seemingly borne out by the report that few if any refugees in Japanese-occupied Chinese cities appear to have made any effort to emigrate to unoccupied China (Dispatch No. 2345 from Chungking dated March 22).

The Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs, in response to the approach made by the U. S. Embassy in Chungking, subsequently pledged the complete support of the Chinese Government in the Board's efforts to rescue and care for the victims of enemy oppression. Full protection was promised the Jews and other minority peoples of Europe "who have been rendered homeless and wandered to China." Particularly gratifying to the Chinese Government was the mention of rescue and relief for "other victims of enemy persecution," including the victims of Japanese oppression (Dispatch No. 2436 from Chungking dated April 15).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: UNITED NATIONS

ETHIOPIA

According to an airgram from the U.S. Legation in Addis Ababa, representations and repeated inquiries have thus far failed to evoke any statement from the Ethiopian Government concerning the extent to which it is prepared to cooperate in the rescue and relief of Jews and other persecuted minorities. The Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, however, is said to have informed a member of the Legation's staff that, since the country is still engaged in reconstruction efforts, the assistance it could afford refugees is necessarily limited (Airgram No. A-20 from Addis Ababa dated May 24).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: NEUTRAL EUROPEAN

SPAIN

In the Board's original communication to Madrid Ambassador Hayes was asked to approach the Spanish Government, explain the recently adopted U. S. refugee policy, and ascertain the extent to which Spain was prepared to cooperate (Cable No. 207 to Madrid dated January 25; see attachment #1 to IV B, General Instructions to U. S. Missions). Hayes replied that he did not consider this "an opportune moment" in this country's relations with Spain to approach the Spanish Government in the sense suggested (Airgram No. A-59 from Madrid dated February 15; see attachment #3 to VI B, Evacuations to and through Spain and Portugal).

In a second communication the Board suggested that Hayes explore the possibility of Spain's relaxing her border control so as to admit more refugees, and of Spain's making a public announcement for her willingness to allow refugees to enter the country (Cable No. 463 to Madrid dated February 18; see attachment #4 to VI B). Hayes in turn indicated that he felt these steps might not be desirable; he suggested instead that any approach to the Spanish Government should be in terms of asking that government to request the German authorities to pursue a more liberal policy in issuing exit permits allowing refugees to leave Axis-held territory for Spain. He questioned, however, whether the time was opportune for even such a limited approach (Cable No. 683 from Madrid dated February 28; see attachment #5 to VI B; see also Airgram No. A-59 from Madrid dated February 15).

On March 18 the Board cabled to Madrid the substance of a license issued by the Treasury to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee covering certain evacuation operations (Cable No. 752 to Madrid dated March 18; see attachment #6 to VI B). Hayes declined to transmit this license to the JDC representative in Spain (Cable No. 997 from Madrid dated March 22, comprising attachment #7 to VI B; see also VI B - 2, Evacuation of Children from France to Spain and Portugal).

In another communication the Board requested that Hayes ask the Spanish Government to establish reception centers for new refugees and

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explain the Board's willingness to make financial arrangements for such centers and to assume responsibility for transporting refugees from Spain. The Board has taken the position that immediate arrangements should be made for the removal of refugees in Spain to a camp set up in North Africa, even though such removal might have to be on an involuntary basis, inasmuch as the removal to other areas of refugees already in Spain would facilitate the desired flow into neutral Spanish territory of refugees in more imminent danger of death. In response to Hayes' request, the Board also undertook to clarify the term "involuntary removal" (Cable No. 799 to Madrid dated March 23; see attachment #1).

In reply Hayes informed the Board that he feels that no such plan to further the evacuation of refugees to and through Spain should be put into effect until it becomes apparent that efforts to stimulate the influx of refugees will render insufficient the facilities now existing for their care. According to Hayes the facilities available - that is, Blickenstaff's organization - are adequate to cope with present problems and have the support of the Spanish Government. The latter, in Hayes' opinion, would look with disfavor upon the plan outlined by the Board. (See Cable No. 1195 from Madrid dated April 6.)

With respect to the President's statement of March 24, Hayes reported that a copy was transmitted to the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the request that it be given the fullest measure of publicity in Spain. The only mention reported to have been made on this subject in the Spanish press to date was that contained in a brief syndicated article appearing in Madrid Newspapers (Dispatch No. 2292 from Madrid dated April 5).

Early in April the Board acquainted Hayes with the details of the Latin American passports project, particularly the reported deportation of internees from Vittel. Hayes was asked to make clear to the Spanish Government the fact that this Government expected Spain, in the interests of humanity, to do everything possible to save these people who are threatened with death through no fault of their own. The Board specifically requested that Hayes ask the Spanish Government to act accordingly in Madrid and in Berlin, and that instructions be given to the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin to afford these people all possible protection. (Cable No. 992 to Madrid dated April 10).

Hayes subsequently advised the Board that such an approach to the Spanish Government had been made and that this approach included representations with respect to the return of the 238 internees from Vittel. A foreign Office official is reported to have stated that the Government of Spain had no information on the reported deportations, although assurance was said to have been given that an attempt would be made to learn

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the facts "with a view toward endeavoring to arrange for the return of those refugees." (See Cable No. 1397 from Madrid dated April 21.)

On April 27 Hayes' attention was again drawn to the urgency of the matter and he was asked to report promptly on any progress made in these approaches. Hayes was also advised of the Vatican's efforts to work out relief measures for the internees in question. Hayes was asked to act jointly with the Papal Nuncio in Madrid, or on his own, if joint action were not immediately forthcoming, in pressing Spain to extend effective protection through the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin (Cable No. 1181 to Madrid dated April 27).

Hayes subsequently transmitted the text of a note received from the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this connection. This note stated in substance that since Switzerland is charged with the protection in Germany of North American interests, as well as those of the majority of the South American Republics, except for Bolivia and Paraguay, it would be advisable if the Board's request were directed to the Swiss Government, "thus avoiding any misinterpretation which might arise should the Spanish Government carry out the desired intervention."

Charge d'Affaires Butterworth has reported that, in reply, he informed the Spanish Ministry that representations have, in fact, already been made to the Swiss Government on this score. Butterworth pointed out that the request addressed to the Spanish Government had been put forward on a humanitarian basis. He also indicated that there was reason to believe that the Vittel group contains a number of persons holding documentation issued in the names of the governments of certain American Republics with whose interests the Spanish Government has been entrusted (Dispatch No. 2459 from Madrid dated May 11).

For further details with respect to these negotiations see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports.

In an effort to encourage the Spanish and Portuguese Governments to give refuge to additional refugee children from France, this Government has recently authorized consular officers in Spain and Portugal to issue up to 1,000 visas to such children arriving during the first six months of 1944. It was requested that the appropriate Spanish authorities be advised of these instructions. Hayes was also asked to inform the Spanish Government that the Board will undertake to arrange for any financing that may be necessary to provide maintenance for refugees from enemy oppression arriving in Spain (Cable No. 1008 to Madrid dated April 12; see also VI B - 2, Evacuation of Children from France to Spain and Portugal, and VI D - 1, Evacuation of abandoned Children from France to Switzerland).

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In the attempt to forestall deportation and almost certain death for some 400 Sephardic Jews, Spanish nationals residing in Athens, the Board asked Hayes to approach appropriate Spanish officials and enlist their aid in obtaining Spanish recognition and protection for the refugees concerned (Cable No. 1108 to Madrid dated April 21; see VI F - 3, Recognition of Spanish Jews in Athens). To date, no word concerning affirmative action on the part of the Spanish Government or even concerning representations by Hayes that such action be taken has been received.

For further details in connection with the problem of removing refugees from Spain see VI B, Evacuations to and through Spain and Portugal, and VI B - 1 through VI B - 4, the latter being specific projects involving the rescue of refugees.

See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives, particularly the account there of the proposed special mission to Madrid of James G. McDonald on the Board's behalf.

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IV-D - 1
attach.#1

CABLE NO. 799 TO MADRID FROM THE BOARD

March 23, 1944

With respect to your telegram of February 28, 1944 no. 683 we appreciate the comments and suggestions with respect to the War Refugee Board contained therein. The War Refugee Board wishes to point out that Camp Iyautey will not be the only haven to which refugees can be removed from Spain. The Board now has negotiations in progress for other havens and you should assume and may advise the Government of Spain that there will be removed from Spain all refugees from occupied areas entering Spain. The Board was pleased to learn that no obstacles are being placed by the Spanish Government in the way of stateless or other refugees wishing to enter Spain from France with or without proper papers and the Board hopes in the future that Government will follow a generous policy in that regard.

The Board knows that the number of stateless refugees entering Spain from occupied areas is extremely small at the present time but the Board desires to inform you that it is taking vigorous steps at the present time vis-a-vis Germany and the satellite countries which it is confidently expected will stimulate the flow of refugees into Spain and other neutral countries from occupied areas. The Board will continue to take all possible action to this end. In any event, in the coming months when the snow melts in the Pyrenees the flow of refugees into Spain is certain to increase.

The Board believes that Spain is most likely to receive substantial numbers of refugees this coming spring as a result of the pressure now being brought to bear on the Axis. The Board is extremely desirous that the Government of Spain be relieved of as many problems as possible connected with this influx, including finance, supply and supervision of refugees. Therefore the following plan of proposed operations in Spain is submitted by the Board for your consideration, advice and comment and such action as is indicated.

All the Board's operations in Spain, including the setting up and maintenance of refuge camps, would be supervised by the Special Attache to your Embassy under your direction. He would have assigned to him a small staff which might include transportation, supply and finance officers. As a base for operations the Attache and his immediate staff might use Madrid. It is proposed that as many as three reception centers

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be established along the French border should the volume of refugees so warrant. At each of these centers a supervisor with experience in refugee work should be in charge. Each supervisor would have a small staff. There would also be attached to each center a medical officer and possibly a small nursing staff. A important member of the staff of each center would be a qualified Security Officer approved by the War Department. These Security Officers would be attached to the reception centers as welfare workers instead of being assigned to the Office of the Military Attache in the Embassy. The dual responsibility of these officers would be to screen refugees in search of possible enemy agents and to obtain from bona fide refugees information of a military nature. Murillo, Tolosa and Figueras are tentatively suggested as reception centers. Other localities may be agreed upon later as points readily accessible to those crossing the Pyrenees.

The Board is of the opinion that these centers should be in frontier areas rather than the interior for the following reasons:

- (1) The nearness of the centers to the frontier would reduce to a minimum the time during which the refugees would be in the hands of the Spanish authorities.
- (2) The refugees will require immediate relief in food, clothing and medical attention once they have crossed the Spanish border as many of them will have previously been in hiding in France and have been subjected to the strenuous travel over the mountains on foot. The refugees would be kept out of the principal population centers, such as Madrid, as far as possible. The attention paid to the presence of refugees would also be reduced by the remoteness of the proposed centers.
- (3) The location of the centers near the border would result in close cooperation between the staffs of the centers and the Spanish frontier officials. The refugees would remain in the centers only so long as to assure medical officers that they are in condition to travel; to allow for preliminary security screening and to supply them with whatever travel documents might be needed.

Since the basic plan is to move those refugees who may enter Spain from occupied areas to North Africa as rapidly as possible, it is hoped that the French authorities will assign to the reception centers as special details, qualified officers to screen the refugees for security and to affix to their travel documents the necessary visas. As regards the problem of screening, it is of course possible and probable that enemy agents may try to enter Spain as refugees. Therefore it is most desirable that when enemy agents are identified by the security officers,

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such identification not be disclosed in Spain but the agents be removed to North Africa for apprehension. This policy has been used in the past with respect to enemy agents and it is clearly preferable that they be held in restraint in United Nations territory rather than be at liberty in a neutral country.

It is requested that you report any objection which you think may be raised by the Spanish Government to the establishment of these centers in the foregoing manner and to their financing by the Board. The funds for their operation probably will be provided by private sources in the United States. As will be noted by you, this plan reduces to a minimum the responsibility of the Spanish Government. Your comment on whether the staffs of the centers should be known to the Spanish Government as official employees of the Government or as representatives of American private welfare organizations will be appreciated by the Board. Incidentally, the American Red Cross is reluctant to participate in the operations of the centers at this time.

Clarification of the meaning of "involuntary removal" of refugees was requested by you in Section I of your telegram of February 28, 1944 No. 683. We anticipate that many of the refugees will wish to proceed to other areas than North Africa once they have escaped from occupied areas. However, the Board feels that it is undesirable that these refugees remain in Spain. They should proceed to North Africa where they may make arrangements for travel elsewhere with greater security for themselves and without embarrassment to the Government of Spain which might be caused should they remain there. It is proposed that the frontier officials and police authorities direct the refugees to the centers, providing them with permits to travel only from the point of apprehension to the nearest center. We hope that the refugees will be advised by the Spanish officials that their presence in Spain will be tolerated only so long as they conduct themselves in accordance with this program. After arrival at the centers, it will be explained to the refugees that the Spanish authorities have released them into the care of the centers. Every effort would then be made to convince the refugees that the travel of other refugees through Spain depends upon the rapid departure from Spain of those who have already entered. It might be further explained that after leaving Spain the refugees would be under the care of UNRRA officials rather than directly under French control. It is believed that such a policy will assure the quick and voluntary departure for North Africa of all refugees who may succeed in crossing the Spanish border if it is handled skillfully by the representatives of the Board.

The Board hopes that you will give your prompt personal attention to this proposal and that your comments and suggestions will be cabled as soon as possible.

War and State Departments have approved this cable.

The foregoing is for Ambassador Hayes' attention.

HULL

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IV AD - 1
attach. #2

CABLE NO. 1195 FROM MADRID TO THE BOARD

April 6, 1944

For reasons pointed out in my message number 974 dated March 20, I do not feel that steps should be taken toward putting into effect any such plan of operations as that which was proposed in Department's message number 799 dated March 23 until and unless it becomes more clearly evident that the War Refugee Board's efforts to stimulate the exodus of unprotected and stateless refugees from German-occupied territories will result in fact in an increase in the number of such refugees entering Spain sufficient to tax the facilities which already exist for their care. My strong recommendation is that the Board attempt to take full advantage of the already proven facilities which are already in existence in the form of Blickenstaff's organization instead of endeavoring to set up an elaborate organization on the assumption that it will be justified by future developments, an assumption with which I am not prepared to agree as yet. Blickenstaff's organization has shown itself to be fully capable of coping with the problems which have arisen so far in connection with the care of stateless refugees and it has also already obtained the confidence of the Government of Spain. It is essential that the wishes of the Spanish Government in the matter be not disregarded inasmuch as the success of the activities of the Board in Spain would depend in a large part upon the willingness of the Spanish Government to cooperate and although it would quite willingly recognize Blickenstaff as a representative of the Board I can state with assurance that the Government of Spain would prefer that this work be left in the hands of Blickenstaff and his organization. The Government of Spain would be suspicious of and disfavor any endeavor on the part of the Embassy to set up in Spain such an organization as is envisaged by the Board so long as the problem of stateless refugees can be handled adequately without such an organization and an unsalutary effect on other more important objectives might well be caused by such an attempt. In the absence of any apparent need for the presence of the numerous personnel mentioned by the Board, a request for admission into Spain might for example prejudice the admission of other personnel whose importance to the war effort is more direct.

If the existing facilities for the care of stateless and unprotected refugees should be overtaxed and if a situation should develop in the future as the Board foresees doubtless the Government of Spain would look favorably upon the expansion of such facilities but it is felt that

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no good purpose could be served by endeavoring to press the proposal of the Board until such time arrives.

The efforts of the Board to assure further destinations to which these refugees can proceed should be of the utmost value regardless of arrangements made for their care within Spain. During the past year the most important single obstacle to the complete effectiveness of Blickenstaff's work has been the lack of such destinations. It is to be noted in this connection that the French authorities have rejected nearly one fourth of the Fedhala applications which have been submitted so far to North Africa for final approval.

Hayes

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: NEUTRAL EUROPEAN

TURKEY

At the instance of the Board the Turkish Government was requested to encourage the entry of more refugees from Bulgaria, Rumania, and other Balkan countries by relaxing border and other controls and by announcing publicly that the entry of refugees into Turkey would be permitted. The Board also indicated to the Turkish Government through Ambassador Steinhardt that it would take all measures, financial and otherwise, to aid in evacuations to Turkey, to maintain refugees in Turkey, and to arrange for their removal elsewhere if such is desirable (Cable No. 146 to Ankara dated February 25; see attachment #1 to VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey).

Following the appearance in U. S. newspapers of an Associated Press dispatch to the effect that a high government official in Turkey had indicated that Turkey was willing to cooperate with the Palestine Commission and Allied diplomats in assisting Jewish refugees to leave the Balkans, the Board asked Hirschmann, its Special Representative in Turkey, for full information on the Turkish position. Hirschmann was also queried as to the desirability of publicizing the Turkish position if verified (Cable No. 142 to Ankara dated February 24; see attachment #1). In reply, Hirschmann advised the Board that such assurances as those reportedly given should be considered "meaningless until they have been implemented by specific action" by the Turkish Government. Steinhardt and Hirschmann urgently recommended that no publicity be given to possible Turkish cooperation inasmuch as any such publicity might cause the Turkish Government to feel that it had already sufficiently placated American public opinion and thereafter lose interest in continued cooperation (Cable No. 345 from Ankara dated February 26; see attachment #2).

The Board advised Hirschmann that, while it was in general agreement that no publicity should be employed which would in any way interfere with the rescue of refugees, publicity given to real acts of cooperation by neutral countries might be helpful in inducing assistance from other countries. Hirschmann was asked to inform the Board of matters in this field which might properly be publicized (Cable No. 198 to Ankara dated March 13; see attachment #3).

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In a report submitted in response to the Board's original circular cable (Cable No. 68 from Ankara dated January 25) Ambassador Steinhardt stated that for the past two years the Embassy in Turkey has been endeavoring to facilitate the transit of Jews from the Axis countries through Turkey en route to Palestine, but that the two major obstacles have been the unwillingness of the Axis countries to permit Jews to depart and the difficulties of transportation. He recommended that this Government could be of assistance by guaranteeing to the Turkish Government that if the Turks made a vessel available for evacuation work and it were lost, it would be replaced immediately, or by arranging to make a ship available for evacuating refugees. He further recommended that this Government bring to the attention of the Axis peoples the fact that they will ultimately be held accountable for their mistreatment of the Jews and other minorities (Dispatch No. 574 from Ankara dated February 20).

According to Ambassador Steinhardt, the principal obstacle to evacuating refugees from the Balkans to and through Turkey has not been the reluctance of the Turkish Government to cooperate but rather the attitude of the authorities in the Axis-controlled Balkans in preventing the refugees from departing from these countries. While transportation is a major problem in the evacuation of these refugees, Steinhardt reported that the Turkish authorities have authorized the issuance of many more transit visas and has offered to provide rail transportation facilities for many more persons than have been utilized until now. In view of this, the Turkish authorities, he said, feel that it would serve no useful purpose to discuss the possibility of additional visas and rail facilities or the establishment of refugee camps until the facilities offered have been utilized (Cable No. 380 from Ankara dated March 3 comprising attachment #4).

Reports from Hirschmann indicated that the bottleneck for the land transfer of Jewish refugee children from Bulgaria to Palestine via Turkey had been broken (Cable No. 388 from Ankara dated March 4; see attachment #16 to VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey). Continuous efforts were made by Hirschmann to obtain shipping facilities to evacuate refugees from Balkan Black Sea ports (see VI C and attachments thereto).

In line with the Board's policy of bringing pressure to bear on satellite governments to desist from abetting persecutions, a request was dispatched to Steinhardt (Cable No. 177 to Ankara dated March 7; see V B - 1, Approaches to the Satellites, and attachment #2 thereto), as well as to other U. S. Missions, asking that certain information be relayed through such channels as were available to the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary.

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In a further attempt to induce the Governments of Rumania and Bulgaria to cease persecuting Jewish refugees within their borders and to permit them to depart, Hirschmann, with the consent to Ambassador Steinhardt, discussed the refugee problem in those countries with their Ministers to Turkey (Cables No. 440 and 499 from Ankara dated March 13 and March 20; see attachment #2 to VI C - 1, Transfer of Jews from Transnistria to Turkey, and attachment #28 to VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey). The Rumanian Minister took the matter up with his government and Hirschmann was advised that the Rumanian Government pledged itself to facilitate in every possible manner the emigration of Jews and that it would transfer all Jews in Transnistria to Rumania proper (Cable No. 474 from Ankara dated March 16; see attachment #3 to VI C - 1). Subsequent reports indicated that this transfer, involving many thousands of refugees, was under way.

The Board suggested that Steinhardt take up with the Turkish Government, as a test case, the matter of two refugees unable to proceed from Hungary to Palestine because of their inability to procure Turkish transit visas, despite the fact that they had Palestine certificates and transit visas for all other countries through which they would be required to pass (Cable No. 272 to Ankara dated March 28).

With respect to the President's statement on atrocities against the Jews, Steinhardt advised the Board of wide publicity in the Turkish and Balkan press and over the radio. Information reaching Steinhardt indicated that the statement made a deep impression on the people of the Balkans and central European countries (Cable No. 568 from Ankara dated March 29).

According to one communication from Steinhardt, a lengthy editorial appearing on the front page of a leading newspaper of Istanbul urged the Turkish Government to take all measures possible to aid Jewish refugees from the Balkans in their efforts to reach Palestine (Cable No. 597 from Ankara dated April 4).

A comprehensive report on the refugee situation as it exists in Turkey and the Balkans was forwarded to the Board by Hirschmann before his departure from Ankara. A detailed summary of observations, conclusions, and recommendations was also submitted (enclosures to Dispatch No. 596 from Ankara dated March 13). In a subsequent cable the Board was advised that the Turkish Government had put into effect a plan of evacuation of refugees from the Balkans by rail via Turkey, this plan having been agreed upon before Hirschmann's return to the United States (Cable No. 643 from Ankara dated April 10; see attachment #5).

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Through the persistent efforts of Steinhardt and Hirschmann, refugees arriving aboard three different ships - the "S.S. Milka," which made two voyages, the "S.S. Maritza," and the "S.S. Bellacitta" - were permitted to land in Turkey and proceed to Palestine. A total of 907 refugees were evacuated during April from Constanza across the Black Sea to Turkey. (See VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey, for a detailed summary of these operations.)

Efforts of the Turkish Foreign Office were enlisted in attempting to obtain German safe-conduct for the "Tari" through German Ambassador von Papan in Ankara. (Cable No. 726 from Ankara dated April 22; see VI C).

As a result of Board representations, Turkish repatriates were said to be arriving from France in groups of 50 or so and at regular intervals (Cable No. 1106 from Lisbon dated April 14; see VI F - 2, Reinstatement of Turkish Citizenship to Refugees in France).

On June 23 a resolution was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Bloom, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. This resolution called upon the Secretary of State to urge that the Government of Turkey "in the interests of humanity facilitate the entry into Turkey of refugees who can escape from the Nazis, and establish in Turkey a refugee camp in which such persons can be temporarily sheltered."

Ambassador Steinhardt was instructed to give this pending resolution such local publicity in Ankara as he might find desirable and to use it, in his discretion, to bring further pressure on the Turkish Government. (See Cable No. 583 to Ankara dated June 29 comprising attachment #6; see also Cables No. 5133 to London, 1282 to Stockholm, 1845 to Madrid, 2228 to Bern, and 1861 to Lisbon, all of the same date.)

For more detailed information concerning negotiations with the Turkish Government designed to facilitate the evacuation of refugees from the Balkans by land and by sea, see VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey. See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives; VI C - 1, Transfer of Jews from Transnistria to Turkey; and VI C - 2, Rescues from Hungary and the Balkans (UOR).

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IV D - 2
attach. #1

CABLE NO. 142 TO ANKARA FROM THE BOARD

February 24, 1944

Not paraphrased.

TO STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMAN FROM THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD.

It is reported here in the papers that a high government official in Turkey told the Associated Press on February 13 that Turkey was willing to cooperate with the Palestine Commission and Allied diplomats in assisting Jewish refugees to leave the Balkans. We would appreciate immediate confirmation of this report. Please give us full information at once on the present position of the Turkish Government on this matter.

The War Refugee Board is desirous of making public the cooperative attitude of neutral countries on this matter, and unless you perceive some objection, we would like to be in a position to publicize at once the attitude of Turkey.

It is extremely important that we be kept currently informed of all developments in Turkey relating to the activities of the Board. We have received numerous inquiries from private agencies concerning the above mentioned press report and have been awaiting advice from you as to its accuracy.

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IV D - 2
attach. #2

CABLE NO. 345 (SECTION ONE) FROM ANKARA TO THE BOARD

February 26, 1944

Not paraphrased.

FOR THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD FROM HIRSCHMANN.

I arrived in Ankara on February 14. In the intervening eleven days I have sent five telegrams Nos. 282, 286, 295, 306 and 314 which set forth "full information on the present position of the Turkish Government" and have kept the board currently informed of all developments in Turkey relating to its activities. Those telegrams not only informed the board fully but contained detailed suggestions of action that should be taken by the board to support our efforts here. Thus far I have had no reply to these telegrams.

As to the press report published in United States concerning which the board has been awaiting advice from me as to its accuracy, may I remind the board that press reports sent to the United States from Ankara are not shown to Embassy or myself and that American newspapers arrive here several months after publication. Your telegram was therefore my first knowledge of any such press report. The correspondent of the Associated Press with whom I have talked today states that the press despatch sent by him on February 13 was based on an interview with Dr. Herdog, Chief Rabbi of Palestine who had previously talked with an official of the Turkish Government who among other things reviewed the situation in Nazi controlled Balkans and urged the need for a ship to leave Constanza under safe conduct of the Red Cross to transport thousands of Jewish children to Palestine.

In connection with the foregoing it seems desirable that the board await my reports and those of the Embassy rather than be influenced by newspaper stories. Even had the interview been with "a high government official in Turkey" it would be unwise to attach too much importance to the casual remarks of an individual government official to a newspaper

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CABLE NO. 345 (SECTION TWO) FROM ANKARA TO THE BOARD

February 26, 1944

Not paraphrased.

correspondent, in that any Turkish official speaking to an American newspaper correspondent would obviously assure him of the intention of Turkish Government to do everything within its power to facilitate Boards objectives. Such assurances intended to obtain favorable publicity for Turkish Government in the United States are meaningless until they have been implemented by specific action by Turkish Government.

Referring to Boards desire to "publicize at once the attitude of Turkey". Ambassador and I urgently recommend no (repeat no) publicity of any kind be given at this time to possible Turkish cooperation. Any such publicity may cause the Turkish Government to feel that it has already sufficiently placated American public opinion and thereafter to lose interest in continued cooperation. Furthermore, it is important to note that negotiations are going on from day to day with Turkish officials and that as they are none too enthusiastic to do anything for Balkan refugees they must constantly be prodded and reminded that the possibility of adverse publicity in the United States hangs over their heads. It seems to us much more important at this time to get Jewish refugees out of the Balkans into Turkey and Palestine than to praise the Turkish Government which has thus far contributed little to our efforts. Premature publicity on this subject in the United States favorable to Turkey is more likely to be harmful than helpful to our efforts.

STEINHARDT

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CABLE NO. 198 TO ANKARA FROM THE BOARD

March 13, 1944

ATTENTION OF STEINHARDT AND HIRSCHMANN

It is stated by you that the Department's 142, February 24, was transmitted when the press story referred to was the Board's only information on the situation in Turkey and before reports were received from you. The Board has greatly appreciated your suggestions for action and your full reports have received immediate attention. We advised you of steps taken by the Board in our cable numbers 144 and 148. General instructions to Hirschmann were contained in cable no. 120 and suggestions for the approach to the Turkish Government were contained in cable no. 146. Information from the British for Hirschmann's attention with reference to refugees who may escape to Turkey was contained in our cable no. 147 of February 26. At the Board's suggestion, the British Foreign Office has instructed its missions abroad to work with members of American missions in carrying out the program of the Board.

The Board is actively engaged in following up other suggestions which you have made. Strong representations are being made through various channels to Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania on the subject of their treatment of Jewish and other refugees and to bring pressure on these Governments other methods will be utilized. A cable has been prepared for transmission to our mission in Moscow and is now being cleared with the War and State Departments, which outlines the Board's activities and details the problems which have to be solved. Harriman is requested in this cable to advise the Soviet Union at once of the Board's activities and to obtain its assistance not only in specific matters suggested by you but in the program generally. This cable will be repeated for your information to Ankara when it is actually transmitted.

The Board is in agreement that no publicity which interferes with the rescue of refugees or in any way impedes such rescue should be employed. There is no intention on the part of the Board to publicize

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any expected actions of cooperation by the Turkish Government until it is convinced that the Turkish Government has taken effective steps in support of the program and in this matter the Board will naturally take into consideration the advice of yourself and Hirschmann. However, the Board desires to restate its view that appropriate publicity in certain features of the program can be of enormous help.

We cite one instance. At the Board's request, the OWI has initiated a campaign directed specifically towards the satellite governments in order to press home to them and their people the serious view which we take of their collaboration with Hitler in the persecution of the Jews and other minorities and our determination through every possible effort to rescue these unfortunates. In connection with other features of the program publicity may also prove helpful, particularly that of rescue itself. To illustrate, appropriate publicity given to sincere acts of cooperation by neutral and other Governments may be extremely helpful in certain cases in securing assistance from other Governments. It will be appreciated by the Board if you will keep it advised of developments which conceivably might be properly publicized in your area.

In its desire to avoid confusion with respect to its cables to its representatives in the field, the Board intends to number its cables to each representative consecutively commencing with this cable. Kindly refer to these Board numbers in your replies to Board cables. Also, please number consecutively all of your cables to the Board.

The foregoing message is War Refugee Board's no. 1 to Ankara and is in reply to your cable of February 26, no. 345.

HULL

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

000737

CABLE NO. 380 FROM ANKARA TO THE BOARD

March 3, 1944

Re your cable No. 146 of February 25, 1944.

Judging from telegrams which I have received and also Hirschman, it appears that the War Refugee Board is under the mistaken impression that the principal obstacle to date has been the Turkish Government's reluctance to cooperate. This is not so. Our greatest obstacle to date has been the Axis authorities in the Balkans who refuse to grant exit visas to Jewish refugees. Although transportation is, of course, a serious problem, it is not impossible to solve it so long as it is possible to bring about the departure of Jewish refugees from the Balkans in increasing numbers.

In regard to sea transportation, negotiations have been entered into with the Minister of Communications with whom I conferred yesterday. We discussed the proposed purchase of the SS NECAT by the War Refugee Board at a cost of approximately \$400,000. It is contemplated that the ship will be given as a gift to the Turkish Red Crescent after the completion of the transfer to Palestine of 5,000 Jewish refugee children from Roumania under the auspices of the International Red Cross. The purchase price of this vessel is estimated to amount to the same sum as it would cost to carry the 5,000 children on a chartered vessel. We are hopeful that if this ship is donated to the Turkish Red Crescent, that society may be persuaded to continue to use the vessel to carry additional refugees after the completion of the transfer of these 5,000.

Re evacuation of Jewish refugees from Roumanian or Bulgarian ports, the Turkish representatives are amenable to reopening negotiations relating to the chartering of the SS VATAN, provided that such negotiations are conducted on the basis of the guarantee of replacement of such vessel in case of loss. I have made such a guarantee to the Turkish Government in writing.

I strongly urge that a Swedish vessel, particularly if there is one in Near Eastern waters, be chartered at once by the War Refugee Board and sent to Istanbul as soon as possible. The negotiations for the SS VATAN and the SS NECAT are likely to be bogged down for a long time, as is customary in the carrying on of negotiations in this part of the world.

(cont.)

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State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

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Re rail transportation, the Turkish authorities have granted transportation visas for 5,000 Jewish refugees on their way to Palestine but until now, because of the reluctance of the authorities in the Axis occupied countries to grant exit visas and because of administrative delays, only a small portion of such transit visas have been utilized. Bulgaria has very recently relaxed somewhat the restrictions which hithertofore have prevented departure of Jewish refugees. It is hoped therefore that unless new obstacles are encountered, it will be possible to increase the refugee movements to a large degree, in the near future.

The Turkish authorities have authorized the issuance of many more transit visas and also have offered to provide rail transportation facilities for many more persons than have been utilized until now. They are of the opinion that until the visa and rail facilities already offered have been utilized, it serves no useful purpose to discuss the possibility of additional visas and rail facilities or the establishment of refugee camps. The Turkish authorities have assured me that when the visa and railway facilities already offered have been utilized they will be prepared to enter into negotiations for a further increase in such facilities.

This whole subject matter has been discussed thoroughly with the Minister of Communications, the Foreign Office and other high Turkish officials. I felt free to do this in view of the Department's opinion that these discussions are unrelated to the Turkish role in the war. The policy of this Government, of which the War Refugee Board is an instrument, has been made very clear to the Turkish authorities and I have felt free to press them for the most complete cooperation.

In the short time that he has been here Hirschman has acquired a complete grasp of the situation and is extremely active and diligent. It is my opinion that in the past two weeks considerable progress has been made.

STEINHARDT

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP-28-1972

IV D - 2
attach.#5

CABLE NO. 643 FROM ANKARA TO THE BOARD

April 10, 1944

The following message is from the Ambassador for the War Refugee Board and is number 32 from Ankara.

I have been advised by the Foreign Office that the Government of Turkey has now put into effect a plan for the evacuation of the refugees from the Balkans by rail via Turkey which was agreed upon before Hirschmann left and that three "convoys" have already departed for Turkey from Hungary.

Please advise Hirschmann that his plan is already in operation, when he arrives in Washington. The details of the plan will be put before the board by him.

STEINHARDT

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1972

100740

IV D - 2
attach #6

CABLE NO. 583 TO ANKARA FROM THE BOARD

June 29, 1944

Congressman Bloom, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, has introduced the following resolution in the House:

QUOTE Recognizing that the United States Government has demonstrated its determination to take all measures within its power to rescue Jews and other victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death at the hands of Nazis by its actions; and

Recognizing that full advantage has not been taken of the great opportunities for the evacuation of refugees in the Balkan countries through Turkey; be it therefore Resolved:

That the Secretary of State be requested by the House of Representatives of the United States to urge that the Government of Turkey facilitate, in the interests of humanity, the entry of refugees who can escape from the Nazis into Turkey and establish a refugee camp in which such persons can be temporarily sheltered on its territory. UNQUOTE

If it will be helpful, in your discretion, this pending resolution may be used by you in bringing further pressure on the Turkish Government and given local publicity.

This is WRB cable to Ankara No. 58.

HULL

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State Dept. Letter 1-11-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 28 1977

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