

JUN 29 1944

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

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

(Signed) J.W. Pehle

Attachment:

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PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

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McClelland sends the following for the War Refugee Board.

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

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

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

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

Particularly used were the following stretches of railroad:

(1) Casp-Kaschau-resov-Lubotin-Nowyszez in direction of Oszwiscim; (2) Satoraljauihaly-Leginamich Klany-Michalovec-Medallaborce.\* Also many thousand troops to and from the Polish front were transported daily over this line; (3) Munkacs-Lavoczne; (4) Galanta-Sered-Leopoldstadt-Novomeato-Trencin; (5) Vruty-Zilina.

(\*) Various letters in this group illegible.

It is



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

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

Approximately 130,000 in sub-Carpathia and Ruthenia mainly from the towns of Beregazest, Felzoviso, Huest, Nagyszollos, Maramarosziget, Munkacs, Tecar and Ungvar.

Approximately 90,000 in Transylvania from Beasteres, Dos, Kolosvar, Karos Vasarhely, Nagybanja, Wagyvarad, Szaszregan, and Szilegy.

In northern Lukaschau, Gyongyos, Sator Aljaujhely and Sarospatsk.

Approximately 75,000 in the Tiaz region from: Kisvarda, Mateszalka, Wagykaroly, Nyiregyhaza and Szatmar Nemeti.

It is also reported by one source that deportations of approximately 20,000 have taken place from certain towns in southern Hungary such as Baos (\*)ya, Baja, Nagykaniesza, Njvidek and Szabadka and further exi (\*)tions, also being made deport Jews from towns of Dunaszerdahely, Gyoor, Komaron, Miskels, Pecs and Szombathely where persons are already concentrated.

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

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

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

In an effort to check such continued deportations Ternaneszov (\*) from the United States, we recommend British and Soviet (\*) broadcasts and especially leaflets. If it is

possible,

possible, the Vatican should be prevailed upon to associate itself with such protest.

There is little doubt that many of these Hungarian Jews are being sent to the extermination camps of Auschwitz (Oswiecim) and Birke Nau (Rajaka) in western upper Silesia where according to recent reports, since early summer 1942 at least 1,500,000 Jews have been killed. There is evidence that already in January 1944 preparations were being made to receive and exterminate Hungarian Jews in these camps. Soon a detailed report on these camps will be cabled.

HARRISON

(\*) apparent omissions

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

4 July 1944

*Noted  
JMT*

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

Dear Mr. Pehle:

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

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

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

Sincerely,

*John J. McCloy*

John J. McCloy

