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19 German Complicity

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GERMAN Complicity

over
4 years

(German complicity)

National Archives, Washington D.C

867.4016/297

Secretary of State
Washington

2136, Oct. 1, 8. Pm

Cosuple

~~Very Confidential~~

Via Copenhagen

Have to promote humanitarian ends.

EEGAN.

... In official ^{circle} quarters the entire question is regarded to class of "internal measures" with which foreign powers have no right to interfere. This attitude has of course hampered our efforts rendering our position most delicate and the serious exhortation of our Govt (is) of little value. German Ambassador here has spoken of this attitude as a reason for not having drastic measures of expostulation but the Department will be aware that his predecessor did file an official note of protest enclosed with Embassy's despatch N° 447, Sept. 7th, 1915. Thus it would appear that as far as official record is concerned the German Govt actually asserted its right to formulate a protest in the circumstance even though the action may have been prompted rather by a desire to avoid further responsibility or blame.

POLITICAL.TURKEY.

Decipher. Admiral Calthorpe, (Constantinople)

January 7th, 1919.

D. 6.45 p.m. Jan. 6th, 1919.

R. 8.0. a.m. Jan. 8th, 1919.

No 47.

If Allies decide to bring to trial those guilty of crimes against humanity during late war I desire to point out that name of Liman Von Sanders should be borne in mind. Nothing would create a deeper impression locally than to cause his arrest by Turkish authorities and his surrender to Allies wide publicity being given to reasons for this action.

He is now here but would in ordinary course leave for Germany with German troops.

Following are briefly some of his crimes.

In June 1914 some 300,000 Greek Ottomans were expelled from Asia Minor littoral without warning and with brutality and partial massacre.

From February 1915 onwards about 1,500,000 Armenians were driven from (?their) homes of whom only about one third survived. From March 1915 onwards about 450,000 Greek Ottomans were similarly treated with similar results. During all these happenings Liman Von Sanders held practically automatic power(? as) Military dictator of whole (group under/cypherable). Evidence is forthcoming that Liman Von Sanders replied to Greek Ottoman deputation which implored him to avert calamity of Aivali expulsion "No, you must

all be driven out. You are faithless".

As a matter of fact appreciable (?numbers of omitted) Greeks were arrested as spies and population of 25,000 were expelled under horrible conditions. Greek Archbishop of Smyrna vouches for above statement and (?other) witness (?considered) (group undecypherable) sound.

^{i e} Greek Consul General at Smyrna stated (? Turkish) Military Governor of Smyrna said Liman Von Sanders had ordered evacuation and any appeal for leniency must be made ~~him~~ to him.

Probably returned prisoners of war can say that as to Kut responsibility and Graven Commission as to condition of our cemeteries on Gallipoli peninsula by trench system deliberately ^c cut through British cemeteries by Liman Von Sanders' order.

On Dec. 3, 1915, Talat Pasha, Min. of the Int. despatched a coded ~~tele~~ circular to all Valis in the provinces. In turn, Valis transmitted copies of the circular to all mutasariifs and Kaymakams, such as on Dec. 7, 1915 the Mutasarif of Tokat... transmitted a copy of the circular ~~to~~ to the Kaymakam of Niksar... on Dec. 7, 1915.

"We have been informed that the general opinion in several circles is that the deportation of Armenians ~~who~~ would take place ~~by~~ through the initiative of the German Govt.

"I urge you to make known in a suitable ~~way~~ (manner) whom^{ever} it may concern that these measures are only taken for military and political reasons and that all the world must know formally that any foreign power has no right to intervene in this matter and in our internal affairs.

From the Vilayet, by a communication of the Min. of the Int. dated Dec. 3, 1915. ~~to~~

War office despatched the same circular to military authorities in ~~the~~ provinces.

Everywhere ~~the~~ public opinion was rife that the deportation of Armenians took place ~~by~~ ^{at} German suggestion.

In the ^{text} of the circular the Min. of the ^{Internal Affairs} does not deny that ~~the~~ public opinion may be erroneous and basically ^{pro-}Turkish.

Appointments --- Oct. 1917 (complete) p. 318
317



German Complicity

Gen. Liman von Sanders, London
Sept. 1, 1919. A telegram from Rome
says that a British ~~to~~ ship (battleship)
arrived to an Italian harbour,
on board there was Gen. Liman von
Sanders, as a prisoner.

He must ^{now} ~~answer~~ give an account
about the massacres in Turkey.

Gen. ^{von} Sanders is on the list of those
persons who will be tried.

The accusation against von Sanders
is that he had ~~so~~ given orders

to massacre Armenians &
Greeks Syrians during wartime

Rec. 254, Wedn. Sept. 3, 1919

Am. Mory. p. 364

deportation:

1- German suggestion 365

f 374 Waugenheim to Morgenthau

"The Frenchians", said Waugenheim, "have shown themselves in this war to be enemies of the Turks."

it is quite apparent that the two people can never live together in the same country.

The Americans should move them to U.S., and we Germans will send some to Poland and in their place send Jewish Poles to the Armenian provinces - that is, if they will promise to drop their Zionist Schemes.

civil authority

Manuscript had June 1914 proposed to at Murad omni
to destroy the internal enemies in Turkey

Lt. Commander Hans Humann, German ^{Naval} attaché
375 in ~~Constantinople~~ Humann, who was "more

a Turk than Enver or Talaat",
"personal ~~em~~-emissary of the
Kaiser, in constant communica-
tion with Berlin & undoubtedly
he reflected the attitude of the
ruling German powers in Germany."

Said to Morgenthau

"I have lived in Turkey the larger part
of my life and I know the Armenians.
I also know that Armenians & Turks cannot
live together in this country.

one of these races has got to go.
And I don't blame the Turks for what they
are doing to the Armenians. I think that
they are entirely justified.

The weaker nations must succumb.
The Armenians desire to dismember
Turkey; they are against the Turks &
the Germans in this war, and they
therefore have no right to exist here.

I also think that Waugenheim
went altogether too far in making a
protest; at least I would not have done so,
military authority.

Embassador Waugenheim's
"right-hand man," #1
= He was a personal friend of Enver since childhood

c/o St. Columba Rectory, 343 West 25th Street, New York, N. Y. 10001

HI, 43, 49, 58, 89, 97, 151

126

German accomplice

Telegram Sent
Department of State, Washington.

Oct. 31, 1916

867.4016/299

Embassy

Berlin. via Copenhagen

3535 Reports for many months past from official and other reliable sources, show that the systematic deportation of the Armenian population in Turkey continues; that their terrible sufferings at the hands of the Turkish authorities are unmitigated, that thousands have died as result of cruelties, massacres and starvation, and that it would appear that these awful conditions are the result of a studied intention on the part of the Ottoman Government to annihilate a Christian race. The true facts if publicly known would shock the whole civilized world.

Inasmuch as the United States Government is aware that the German Government shares its views with regard to relief for the Armenians, as is shown by the fact that the German Ambassador at Washington on October eight, 1915, informed the Department that the German Government had protested to the Turkish Government against the treatment of the Armenians, the United States Government feels

that it can confidentially appeal to the German Government for its assistance in securing an amelioration of existing conditions in the country of its ally.

You may communicate the foregoing to the Minister for Foreign Affairs with the expressed hope of this Government that favorable consideration, and action will be given it.

Signed / Lansing

Telegram Sent.

Green cipher

Department of State

Washington,

Nov. 2, 1916.

Am Embassy,

Constantinople.

3081

Your 2186, October 17, 9 p.m.

For your information a telegram was sent to Berlin
On Oct. 31 pointing out continued activity of the Turkish
Government against the Armenians; calling attention ~~of~~ to
~~sharing~~ to the fact that German Government has showed
evidence of sharing the views of this Government by pro-
testing to the Turkish Government against the treatment
of the Armenians; and asking the assistance of the German
Government in securing an amelioration of the existing
conditions in the country of its ally.

The Embassy in Berlin was instructed to communicate
this telegram to the Imperial Foreign Office with the
expressed hope of this Government that favorable consi-
deration and action would be given it.

Signed/ Beles Acting ?

867-4016/299

IHM Telegram received

From Constantinople Dated Oct. 17, 1916.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

2186, Oct. 17, 9.p.m.

~~Confidential.~~ 797

Embassy's 2136, Oct. 1, 8 p.m.

From report by eyewitness sent by Consul Jackson and from other ^{re}deliable sources it appears that deportations accompanied by studied cruelties continue. Families are separated and scattered among Moslems. Clergy separated from their people, forced conversions to Islam perseveringly pushed, children and girls from deported families kidnapped. In order to avoid opprobrium of the civilized world, which the continuation of massacres would arouse, Turkish officials have now adopted and are executing the unchecked policy of extermination through starvation, exhaustion, and brutality of treatment hardly surpassed even in Turkish history. In spite of official opposition it has been possible to reach thousands and save their lives temporarily. But situation demands not only /sheet two/ immediate financial assistance but active steps instead of formal protest. I therefore repeat suggestion in Embassy's ¹⁵1948, July 15, 10.a.m., that Germany and Austria ^uHungary be induced to force their Turkish ally to cease all further deportation and allow free relief work, as well as Mr. Philip's further suggestion in Embassy's telegram 2136, concerning forced conversions and the departure from Turkey of those who are able.

2

Peet requests such part of the above as the Department may see fit be communicat~~ed~~ed by Barton who may use the information with some discretion.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.~~

If such requests to Germany and Austria Hungary are made through the usual channel and are found to be ineffective, which from information received ~~will be the~~ in Berlin and from German sources here it is believed will be the fact, it is suggested in the gravity of the situation calls for such action and it is deemed advisable, that personal letters reciting the facts, written by the President to the Emperors of Germany and Austria may produce the desired result. In that case publicity should be given such letters.

ELKUS AMBASSADOR.

EGAN.

Telegram received

Green cipher

from Constantinople

dated August 20, 1915

Rec'd Aug. 23, 1915.

Secretary of State

Washington.

950.

Aug. 20, 1915, 8.p.m.

Confidential

Your 955.

German Ambassador's protest has not improved conditions in the interior. Instructions from German Government to their Ambassador to demand from the Sublime Porte positive (?) that these lawith deportations cease and all possible reparation be promptly made may with. Other influences now being exerted improve the situation. Bulgarians have made strong representations.

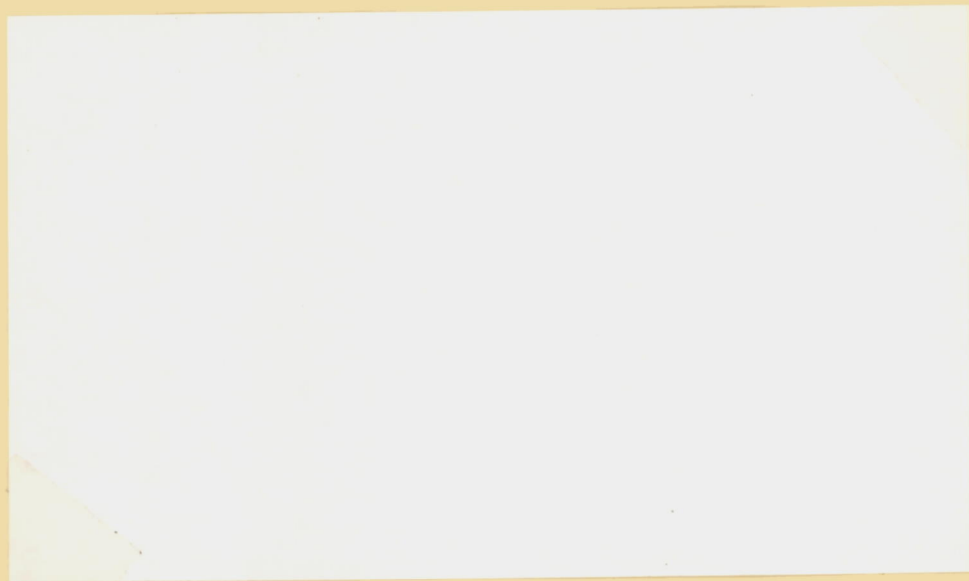
Morgenthau.

American Ambassador.

" apparent omission).

867.4016/101

CONFIDENTIAL



Appendix A

British High Commission,
Constantinople.
19th June 1920.

A. C.

No. 881/5040/274.

My Lord,

I have the honour to forward herewith for Your Lordship's information, copy of a letter, dated 6th June 1920, received from the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Army of the Black Sea, respecting a letter found in a secret file belonging to the German Deputy Director General of the Anatolian Railway, regarding the deportation of Armenian employees, together with copy of enclosure thereto.

Enclosures
2

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

HIGH COMMISSIONER.

The Right Honourable

The Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., P.C.,

etc., etc., etc.

COPY

General Headquarters
Constantinople
6th June 1920.

His Excellency
The High Commissioner.

I have the honour to forward herewith copy of translation taken from a letter found in a secret file belonging to Herr J. GUNTHER, Deputy General Director of the Anatolian Railway, regarding the deportation of Armenian employees.

The Germans protested against the deportation of these employees from the standpoint that the railway would be disorganized without these persons, but it is interesting to note that a German signed the deportation order.

I have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

/s/ General,
 Commanding-in-Chief,
 Army of the Black Sea.

TRANSLATION:

COPY

Chemin de Fer Ottoman
d'Anatolie.

28th October 1915.

7702/389 G/W

To the Administration of the Anatolian Railway Co., Berlin.

RE ARMENIAN EMPLOYEES.

On the 14th of this month, under 7312/374 we wrote you among other matters regarding the question of Armenian employees. Since that date this question has taken a turn for the worse.

The Commission has meanwhile come to decisions without consulting us. Please see enclosure No. 1.

For the "Teskeré" , to which the Commission refers, please see enclosure No. 2.

Herr Bottrich has made no present to the (Ottoman K) War Office against the decisions of the Commission, but has allowed himself to pass on these decisions sanctioned by his signature. *protest*

Our enemies will some day pay a good price to obtain possession of this document, because by means of the signature of one of the members of the Military Mission, they will be able to prove that the Germans have not only done nothing to prevent the Armenian persecutions, but certain order to this effect have emanated from them, i.e. have been signed by them.

The fact that this document, of which much will be said in the future, bears a German and not a Turkish signature, is also valuable to the Turks, as the Military Commissioner has caustically pointed out.

This decision is in two respects a heavy blow to us. Materially, when all nerves are strained to the utmost in order to meet the demands of the war, it is impossible for us to undertake any charge of personnel, to say nothing of the question of exchanging and dismissing experienced workmen for inexperienced novices.

It is not appreciated that the fact of an exchange is in itself a disturbing element, especially when this is done by groups and on certain fixed dates.

From a formal standpoint, the proceedings of the Government are in infringement of the administration of the railway, and amount to an arbitrary act. As you perceive, the Military Commissioner is alone authorized to sanction occasional deviations from regulations. Thus we are dependent upon his personal idiosyncracies, and as he is as chauvinistic as the others, it will be difficult to come to an understanding with him.

Among the employees whom it is proposed to dismiss there are a number of persons who are bound to us by length of service and devotion to duty, whom we must sooner or later abandon to destitution with their whole families. Up to the present we have taken much trouble to protect these persons and who must now be exposed to the calamity of deportation.

There is another important point and that is the relation of the "agents commissionés" to the benevolent societies (Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen). The logical consequence of the dismissals is the application of the newly created law concerning the property of Armenians, and we can foresee the time when we shall be required to guarantee the credit of Armenian employees of this Commission.

In our negotiation we are very careful how we allude to this matter, for you know that our benevolent societies (Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen) have no legal basis as they are not recognised by the Turkish government. In the

present situation the Turks need only remember this fact in order to seize upon this question and act with violence.

We have minutely discussed this question with General von BRONSART, and we have clearly pointed out to him the fact that we cannot guarantee any regular traffic if the measure in its present form is to be carried out.

We suggested to him that he should use his influence to prevent this measure's coming into force during the war. In order to make it easier for Enver to make up a position favourable to our demands (who perhaps involuntarily has come under the influence of these chauvinistic circles) we propose to bring this decision into force as it stands, conditionally on the sanction of the board of directors, as soon as the demobilization of the Turkish Army is completed.

It would be useless to protect^s against the decision to day the result would be a defeat. We also think that to gain time is everything, and it is presumed that after the war the German Government will not quietly look on while we are being destroyed piecemeal.

Herr Bronsart has not rejected our opinions, which are in opposition to the decisions of the Government, but he points out that he does not understand the question, and that Herr Bottrich, the expert attached to him, considered it quite possible to carry out the programme as originally contemplated. He promised to have further consultations with the Embassy and the German Military Attaché regarding this question, and he stated that he would base his decision

upon these conversations. He is of opinion that this current is so strong that if he decided to fight against this measure, he must at the same time be prepared to resign if he does not carry his point.

You see, therefore, that we are really in a bad position, particularly with regard to the approaching date for the discharge of the first group on November 22nd of this year 1915, because we are alone and unprotected and in opposition to a very strong current. It is a well-known fact that the Turks only do for others what they are obliged to do, and we have no means of bringing pressure to bear upon them.

We inform you in haste of the situation as it stands at present before post closes. With the next post we shall probably send further information and in the meantime will telegraph.

We shall be greatly obliged if, after consultation with the Foreign Office, you will telegraph us so that we may know how to act in this matter.

It appears to us quite practicable for the German Headquarters, in the interest of the conduct of the war, to advise ENVER to postpone the execution of the proposed "Reform" until after the war. We are, of course, unable to judge whether this intervention is obtainable.

DEPUTY GENERAL DIRECTOR. (1)

(1) Public Record Office, London E 7556/7556/44.