

AMERICAN EMBASSY\*  
CONSTANTINOPLE

August 24, 1915

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

Referring futher to previous correspondence regarding the attitude of the Turkish Government towards the Armenians in Turkey, I have the honor to transmit to you herewith, for your information, duplicate copies of a despatch received from Consul Jackson at Aleppo, dated August 10, 1915.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

[Signed] Morgenthau

Enclosure: as stated.

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\* Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/139

AMERICAN CONSULATE\*

Copy  
N. 341

Aleppo, Syria, August 10, 1915

The Honorable  
Henry Morgenthau,  
American Ambassador,  
Constantinople.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a communication dated the 6th instant from Rev. F. H. Leslie, American Missionary, at Ourfa, and lately appointed American Consular Agent in that district. The contents of Mr. Leslie's letter are most significant in view of the presence there of 427 civilians of the belligerent countries, of which 140 are British, 157 French, 112 Russians, and 18 Montenegrins, and which numbers include 42 women and 60 children.

Yesterday I telegraphed the Embassy that the Commander of the 4th Army had ordered that all such women and children and those also that are en route to Ourfa (there are about 30 in Aleppo from Beirut) should be sent under escort to Alexandretta to embark. I also added that the conditions in Ourfa justified the greatest effort toward having all the belligerent men held there sent out of the country. It is my belief that there may be a very disastrous result to the Armenian question, as mentioned in Rev. Leslie's letter, and no time should be lost in having the belligerents removed before there is a conflagration in which they run great risk of being caught.

It is intended that Vice Consul Edelman shall go to Ourfa this week to carry funds to the interned, as there is no possible means except by private carrier.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

(Signed): J. B. Jackson.  
Consul.

Enclosure:

Letter from Rev. F. H. Leslie.

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\* Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/139

COPY.\*

Ourfa, Mesopotamia, August 6, 1915.

My dear Consul Jackson,

The situation in this city is very dangerous and daily getting worse. The feeling between the Moslems and Christians is very bitter and is at present almost at the breaking point, and we have no government here. Fourteen “volunteers” from Stamboul (lately some from Diarbekir) have terrorized the governor, the gendarmery commander, the martial law examining commission and all the other chief officers of the local government so that they dare not move to protect the Christian population or to oppose the will of these murderers who now have everything under their control. They are nightly seizing the best and most prominent Christian citizens and after a period in prison here sending them on to that death-trap Diarbekir.

For six weeks we have witnessed the most terrible cruelties inflicted upon the thousands of Christian exiles who have been daily passing through our city from the northern cities. All tell the same story and bear the same scars: their men were all killed on the first days’ march from their cities, after which the women and girls were constantly robbed of their money, bedding, clothing, and beaten, criminally abused and abducted along the way. Their guards forced them to pay even for drinking from the springs along the way and were their worst abusers but also allowed the baser element in every village through which they passed to abduct the girls and women and abuse them. We not only were told these things but the same things occurred right here in our own city before our very eyes and openly on the streets. The poor weak women and children died by thousands along the roads and in the khan where they were confined here. There must be not less than five hundred abducted now in the homes of the Moslems of this city and as many more have been sexually abused and turned out on the streets again. They have even abused these girls openly on the streets and before the eyes of the foreigners. These are the conditions in the city to which the wives and daughters of the belligerents are being sent.

Moreover the situation here is dangerous. The Ourfa Christians seeing and knowing very well what has happened to these other exiles are not in a mood to accept exile themselves, and if it is attempted they may resist. Resistance, even of a few, will certainly mean a massacre and then all Christians, foreigners as well, are in danger. Fully one half of the interns are living in native houses in the city where they will be exposed in case the above happens. The situation is critical. The Moslems have even hinted at taking the wives and daughters of some of the interns. Not being officially

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recognized I cannot protect them. I earnestly beg of you to send Vice-Consul Edelman here immediately for the protection of the interns and to do anything possible together with the German Consul to persuade the military commander of this district to protect the Christian population here and prevent their exile.

Unless the Vice-Consul comes I cannot handle this work nor remain here much longer. No less an official than Mr. Edelman ought to come.

We are in a great need of money for the interns. Please send by the Vice-Consul. The German missionaries are sending this same information about conditions to their consul.

Your faithfully,  
(Signed): F. H. Leslie