

AMERICAN EMBASSY\*  
CONSTANTINOPLE

No. 644

November 18, 1915

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith, in duplicate, copy of a despatch, dated November 4th, last, from the American Consul at Mersine, relative to the deportation of Armenians and its attendant consequences.

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

[signed] Morgenthau

Enclosure: Copy of despatch from Mersine, in duplicate.

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\* Source: NA/RG59/867.4016/239

AMERICAN CONSULATE\*

Copy

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 502

Mersina, Turkey  
November 4, 1915

The Honorable  
Henry Morgenthau,  
American Ambassador,  
Constantinople.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform you that the influx of deported Armenians from Anatolia to Syria continues unabated. In enumerating the various distressing elements connected with this movement I perhaps failed to point out the terrible unsanitary conditions that prevail in the vicinity of the camps or stations near Tarsus and Osmanie. These result in part from the overcrowded state but largely also from the imperfect burials of corpses of victims of starvation and disease. The mortality among the deported is daily increasing in percentage and when the rains set in the toll will be frightful. The feeding problem is completely neglected and will become worse in the future as even the regular population is beginning to suffer because of a scarcity of wheat. The crop this year was only half of normal yield and there were enormous shipments to Constantinople for the army.

In view of Your Excellency's appeal to the Ottoman Government in behalf of the deported Armenians, which unfortunately has as yet been unheeded, and the reported suggestion of Lord Bryce, former British Ambassador to the United States, that the United States take measures to prevent the extermination of Armenians, it may perhaps be permissible to refer to facts in the past illustrating how British and other European Governments rested supinely during and after the massacres of 1909, in Adana. It may be recalled that after the first massacre in Adana early in April had subsided a number of foreign warships had arrived at Mersina for possible intervention. While they were lying off this port a second massacre broke out on the

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24th of April, far more destructive than the first. No action of any kind was taken by their commanders then or afterwards to indicate the displeasure of the European Governments. The responsibility for this inaction has never been investigated and the part played by the then British Vice-Consul (the late Major Doughty-Wylie, a brave and courageous soldier but perhaps a less successful diplomat), who was openly accused by Armenians as to blame for having counselled them to deliver up their arms, also has been scarcely ever referred to.

While it is to be hoped that Your Excellency's representations will ultimately bear fruit and that the Armenians on the one hand will learn the futility of their political agitations and the Turks understand the folly of their present policy yet I respectfully submit that in view of the past inaction of the various European Powers in the settlement of the Armenian question it is scarcely in point for any European statesman to attempt to shift the burden of this matter to the Government of the United States.

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

(Signed): Edward I. Nathan  
American Consul