No. 27

Consulate of the United States
Jerusalem, September 28, 1887

Honorable James D. Porter,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Washington D. C.

Sir

I have the honor to report that Nachly Abdelnur Kurt, a naturalized Citizen of the United States, but formerly an Ottoman Subject, having been born in the City of Jerusalem, where he and his family are at present residing, has made complaint at this Consulate that the Turkish authorities have demanded of him the payment of the Military tax; thus not recognizing his right of expatriation.

He asks to be relieved and defended from the payment of the aforesaid Military tax, as he fears if he gives way to this demand, it will only expose him to further encroachments on his liberties as an American Citizen.

I have instructed him to refuse payment of the tax, pending your decision, which I hereby request.

It may be proper to add that the wife & Children of Mr Kurt have always been residents of this City, and have not accompanied him in his visits to the United States. Also that he intends to return to the United States to reside in the course of a year.

Mr Kurt has a passport from the Department of State, No 8995, dated December 15. 1883, filed at this Consulate.

I am, Sir
your obedient Servant

(Copy of translation of Enclosure sent with despatch No. 26.)

Mutessariflik of Jerusalem
The Governor of Jerusalem to the U. S. Consul.

Sir:—

It has been represented to me in a memorial from the Police Department that the Consulates do not lend the necessary assistance to cause the Foreign Jews [literally People of others] to return to their countries after the expiration of the temporary period assigned to them to perform their pilgrimage viz. one month, in conformity to the decision of the Government based on a special Iradeh prohibiting foreign Jews from coming to reside and settle in Palestine; that as thereby this decree is infringed, the Police asks that the necessary steps be taken at the different Consulates to the end that on the expiration of the above mentioned term, the necessary facilities should be afforded by them, here and on the embarkation at Jaffa, for the return of the said Jews to their homes, and that the needful instructions on the subject be given to the various Vice Consulates at Jaffa.

I have addressed communications to this effect to all the Consulates, as now to yourself to which I request a reply.

I avail myself of the opportunity to assure you of my respect and friendship.

(Seal) Mohammed Raouf,
Governor of Palestine.

The 22nd Zi-El-Hidjah, 1304
29th August 1303
10 September 1887