

OF 3186
Political Refugees
Jan-June 1939

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
JAN 9 - 1939
MR. WELLES

EW

*J.M.
J. W. ...
...*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 5, 1939

*To Legation
Port au Prince 113*

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JAN 17 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

3186

My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing herewith a telegram received this morning from our Legation in Port-au-Prince.

My own feeling is that efforts of the character described in this telegram should be discouraged. I cannot believe that any attempt to settle fifty thousand German refugees in Haiti would ever have a successful outcome because of the fundamental differences in race, standard of living, culture, and customs between the prospective immigrants and the Haitian people themselves. In my opinion, even if the colony were started, it would only be a few years before very serious friction would arise between the refugees and the Haitian authorities and people. The other possibilities pointed out in Minister Mayer's telegram are, of course, likewise of very great importance.

If you agree, I feel it would probably be wise to discuss this matter with the Advisory Committee in New

The President,
The White House.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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840.48 REFUGEES/1294

JAN 13 1939

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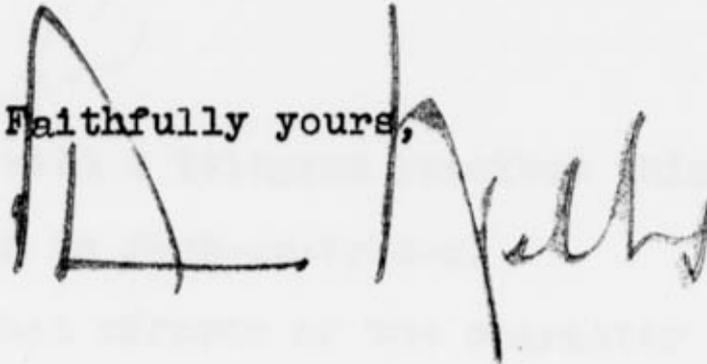
OFFICIAL FILE

-2-

York and make every effort to have them try and coordinate efforts of this character so that problems of this nature will not arise.

Believe me

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A. H. Halls". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

Enclosure:

No. 2, January 4,
1939, 1 p.m., from
Port-au-Prince.

*Returned
to State*

"S.W.
I agree
JDR"

3186

(original returned to
Mr. Welles 1/9/39)

January 5, 1939

My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing herewith a telegram received this morning from our Legation in Port-au-Prince.

My own feeling is that efforts of the character described in this telegram should be discouraged. I cannot believe that any attempt to settle fifty thousand German refugees in Haiti would ever have a successful outcome because of the fundamental differences in race, standard of living, culture, and customs between the prospective immigrants and the Haitian people themselves. In my opinion, even if the colony were started, it would only be a few years before very serious friction would arise between the refugees and the Haitian authorities and people. The other possibilities pointed out in ^{Ferdinand L} Minister Mayer's telegram are, of course, likewise of very great importance. ¹²⁸⁰⁹

+162
+162-2
+198

If you agree, I feel it would probably be wise to discuss this matter with the Advisory Committee in New

The President,

The White House.

-2-

York and make every effort to have them try and coordinate efforts of this character so that problems of this nature will not arise.

Believe us

Faithfully yours,

Sumner Welles

x20

Enclosure:
No. 2, January 4,
1939, 1 p.m., from
Port-au-Prince.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS
OF THE UNITED STATES

PETITION

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, are aware of the extreme emergency of the problem of political refugees from Fascist countries faced by the entire civilized world. We fully appreciate the generous move made by our President and Secretary of State who have taken the initiative in convoking an International conference with a view of securing speedy and cooperative action in behalf of these innocent victims of racial and religious persecution.

IN ORDER TO CARRY out the spirit manifested in the call of our Government for International relief action, we petition the President and the Congress of the United States to make provision by administrative action and, if need be, by legislation.

THAT THE UNUSED PORTION of the quota of any country be made available for the admission of refugees from any other country, and that any portion of the aggregate total of all quotas not required for the admission of refugees during the present fiscal year shall be made available for the admission of such refugees during the following fiscal year.

WE, ACCORDINGLY, DO HEREWITH endorse Joint Resolution H.J. Res. 637 and petition for its early passage.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, do herewith authorize the Jewish People's Committee to represent us before the Government and the Congress of the United States and to cooperate with the International Commission that may be established at the conference called by our Government as well as with every and all organizations working for the relief of the refugees from racial and religious persecution with a view of accomplishing the purpose of this petition.

Respectfully submitted,

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ALL PETITIONS MUST BE RETURNED TO OUR OFFICE AS SOON AS FILLED.

JEWISH PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE
For United Action Against Anti-Semitism and Fascism
1123 Broadway, N. Y. C. Chelsea 3-5787

January 9, 1939

Respectfully referred to the officials of the State Department for consideration and acknowledgment.

3186

M. H. McINTYRE
Secretary to the President

hm

Letter from Siegfried Loewenthal, The Siegfried Loewenthal Co., Cleveland, Ohio, 1/7/39 to the President. Asks aid to bring Dr. and Mrs. Isidor Landau to the U.S. without delay. Attached is a translation of the Rought Riders by Theodore Roosevelt.

X 359

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January 10, 1939

Respectfully referred to the Secretary
of State for consideration and reply.

3186

M. H. McINTYRE
Secretary to the President

edb

Letter to the President 1/2/39 signed by Michael Karas and Susan Karas, 26 Odell Avenue, Endicott, N. Y. Asks that visa be granted to son to enter U. S. from Czechoslovakia.

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January 11, 1939

Respectfully referred to the State
Department.

M. H. McINTYRE
Secretary to the President

gdc

Letter to the President 1/5/39 from

Horace G. Marks, ^x
347 Fifth Ave.,
NYC

Attorney retained on behalf of German refugees to whom Cuban Gov't. has issued permits allowing entry to and sojourn in that country. Passports presented to Consuls at Berlin, Vienna and Amsterdam but request for non-immigration transit visas to enable them to sail to US and pass thru to Miami enroute to Havana refused. Protests this as well as attitude taken during interview of Jan. 4th with Messrs. Messersmith and Coulter of the State Dept.

3186

1159 a

B

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

3186 7/18/39



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
January 11, 1939

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. McINTYRE:

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xPP7129-A
I have your memorandum of January 6, 1939 attaching the enclosed letter to the President and Mrs. Roosevelt from ¹⁸⁷² Mrs. Hilda Roosevelt v. Koschembahr, with photographs of her family and other enclosures including a statement addressed to the President expressing her sympathy with the German refugees and with the German people. Mrs. Koschembahr suggests on page 8 of the statement that the President head a movement called "The Organization of the Principle of Good".

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I can only suggest that you acknowledge the receipt of Mrs. Koschembahr's letter and enclosures, informing her that they have been read with interest, and state that it would not be possible for the President to take part in an organization such as she refers to.

You may also wish to advise her that this Government has since March of 1938 been actively engaged in efforts to relieve the lot of these unfortunate people through intergovernmental action, and to send her the attached copy of Mr. Myron Taylor's address of October 3, 1938, which describes in detail this Government's efforts and program on behalf of political refugees.

Enclosures:

1. Address of October 3, 1938.
3. Letter from Mrs. Koschembahr, December 25, 1938, with its enclosures.

[Handwritten signature]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*Missy
Mac
between you
to each*

Grandniece of former Pres. Theodore Roosevelt, Mrs. Gerhardt von Koschembahr, who, with her husband and family, is a refugee from Germany now residing in this country. She encloses a long letter to the President from "F.W.K-B.", a German citizen, who writes of the soul-destroying dictatorships of Central Europe and who states: "Today the world must learn from Europe what should not be done, what errors must be avoided so that humanity may survive." Asks the President to make it his task to strengthen a united front against the destruction of humanity and to place himself at the head of a movement --"The organization of the Principle of Good."

359

Mrs. von Koschembahr urges that all German vessels be prohibited from entering American harbours; stop all foreign currency from entering Germany; decline American citizenship to all nationalistic and propagandistical people and "you will be aiding the decent German elements to regain their former strength *** you will save your own people and all the rest of the world ----"

Missy
The Pres. asked for
a brief of this correspondence.
By

Mac!

Personal

January 13, 1939

My dear Mrs. von Koschembahr:

This will acknowledge the receipt of your recent letter to the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, which has been read with interest.

I am afraid it will be impossible for the President to take part in an organization such as you refer to. As you know, this Government has, since March of 1938, been actively engaged in efforts to relieve the lot of these unfortunate people to whom you refer through inter-governmental action, and I am glad to enclose herewith a copy of Mr. Myron C. Taylor's address of October third, 1938, which describes in detail this Government's efforts in behalf of political refugees.

May I assure you that your thoughtfulness in writing as you did is much appreciated, and I am returning herewith the photographs and clippings which you forwarded with your letter, as I feel you may wish to have them in your possession.

Sincerely yours,

M. H. McINTYRE
Secretary to the President

Mrs. Hilda Roosevelt von Koschembahr,
"Sans Souci",
Shore Road,
Cape Elisabeth,
Portland, Maine.

RB/bsp

Enclosures

"Sams Douci" L former Babo Estate 7 Shore Road.
Cape Elizabeth, Portland, Maine, Cumberland County
25.XII.1938.

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1/3-39
bop

Dear President Franklin D. Roosevelt
and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt,

in sending you with the seasons most sincere
greetings and wishes, this latest photograph
of our large family now seated around Port.
Lafayette on the beautiful sea-side,
I feel absolutely bounden by strong feelings of loyalty
to enclose this letter which most clearly & accurately
describes the most serious situation in which
the most decent & refined religious & well-cultured
people of long standing traditions find themselves
to-day! Their inalienable rights in their
their every word and action are deliberately guarded
by unscrupulous members of the secret police and a
completely diabolical system of spies in every household
would make the very stones cry out so that I would
be even kinder than these words to pass this
message. This cry from thousands of tortured souls
to the great leader of one of the greatest nations on earth
whose citizens we soon hope to become.
As you see by these cuttings, I have spoken & will con-
tinue to speak clearing up intolerance & misunderstanding
about the majority of our poor decent German people
who are not identical with such partial persecution
and barbaric substitutes of slaves.

2.)

As was sufficiently clear in Mr Chamberlain's case
fair words and decent actions are words & words
material means are completely powerless when
they come up close against Evil & Evil & Evil.
Read Daniel 7, 8, 11 and Revelations XIII, you know
there must only greater & spiritual force can help
to subdue the blasphemies of God and Marked.
Because you, surely beloved President & you, noble
are such great and decidedly spiritual men
it is your lot and wonderfully high, magnificent mission
in our poor, terribly troubled and unchristian world,
to guide a great brave and religious Nation into
the spiritual fight against the evil forces of Darkness
which are hardening to engulf the whole of un-
fortunate Humanity.
There are countless heroic souls struggling in vain against
meshes of a giant spider's web it is up to the only
positively free and greater & democratic Nation of this
World to step in and save them.
Stop all German, commercial and other vessels from
entering American Harbours stop foreign consuls
from entering Germany except publicly all nationalistic
and propagandistic offices declining them citizenship
and you will be aiding the decent & ordinary elements
to regain their former strength & overthrow the blasphemies
as he has overturned God and cast away His Commandments.
You will save your own people and all the rest of the world
from the most evil and most satanic system of destruction
that has ever been heard of. Through & the the
God bless you both and all the members of your family
God bless the United States and all its responsible leaders
in the years to come & in 1939
most sincerely yours Hilda Roosevelt von Roschombahr

To the President of the United States.

Sir,
The extreme tension under which the population of almost the entire world is now suffering, and the horror at their fate forces me to write these lines. I am not doing so in order to increase the vast mass of written material proceeding from both experts and laymen by another voice calling in the wilderness and so throwing a sop to my own conscience, but in the hope of calling forth a deed through my written word, a deed which may help to ward off the dangers threatening humanity? For only such thoughts can have value, that cease to remain dead letters, and push through into the realm of actuality because of their inherent truth.

You may ask, Sir, why I am addressing these lines to you? Because I know you by your words and your actions, and because we, the people of Central Europe, that are citizens of totalitarian states, see in you the man, in whom we unite all the hope for a better future, that we Germans, who have suffered five years of despotic dictatorship, can still summon in our hearts. We look to you, Sir, because you, as the leader of a free nation, have proved, that you realize the needs and necessities of our epoch; you, as a man of action, undeterred by all opposition and without interfering with liberty, have the courage to forge ahead, on the path which you have recognized as the right one, in order to ward off the catastrophes we are living through. We look to you, because you are, in the truest

and highest sense of the word, the Leader of a nation. For, unlike all other dictators of the present time, you do not use your powers and authorities to carry through your ideas with brute force, but you endeavor to convince your people of the necessity of your actions through the power emanating from your personality. Thus the victories you have attained are enduring, as you have conquered open opposition in an open contest. Thus the great part of your people that is of good will responds to you, and unlike the dictators, you have the satisfying conviction, that the people are truly at one with you, because they are so of their own free will. But the most important, and for us the dominating factor is, that your actions attain success, because they proceed from the source of the eternal laws that have their roots in justice, equity and humanity. This, Sir, is the fundamental difference between you and those dictators, whose actions proceed from the principle of materialism- of brute force, dynamics and barbarism. Your actions, which may superficially resemble those of the dictators, lead to a goal which is at one, with that of the divine will, while the dictators of Central Europe work ultimately for evil, for the destruction of culture and human harmony.

For what are all the laws of our dictators, if not a means, on political, economic, social and cultural lines, to form our people into a tool of might and force? ^{MATERIAL} Might and force can never serve humanity and never further its advancement, they can never further the great and true ideal of a community of nations, they can only help to further the division of the nations and bring about destructive wars.

We, who are ourselves suffering the results of the politics of our dictators, know, that this destructive and disruptive principle is causing unheard-of damage to our nation. Only one who sees these results day by day with his own horrified eyes can realize to what moral depths the German people have been brought through the attitude of its leaders. No words can describe the sorrow of those among us whose inner beliefs rest on the moral principle, and who have not been robbed by mass-suggestion of their inner integrity. A fact which gives us hope and trust is the steady and rapid growth of an inner opposition among the German people, brought about by the great mistakes the government has made in every department. We are not blind to the fact, however, that this opposition, in the greater part of the people, is not actuated by the same motives that lead us to recognize and abhor the evil principle; it is mostly due to a discontent, actuated by selfish reasons, with the ever more confused and untenable position of things in Germany, which bring about ever increasing sacrifices and burdens laid on the individual. Intellectually the terrible effects of a regime based on force and tyranny are felt in two ways: The people are being educated as hypocrites and taught to conceal their real feelings, while weak and bad elements are tempted to denounce others and reap the benefits of their despicable actions. In the long run, all this must have a destructive effect on the moral and mental qualities of the nation. We who love our people and hope to save it from complete destruction, hope with all our souls that the prevailing system will destroy itself within a comparatively short time.

Of necessity, this will and must come to pass when the governments and nations that still respect the liberty and dignity

of man, know how to react to the danger that is threatening them too, from outside and from within. Only if governments and nations stand united in these decisive moments of history to set their own house in order, in the sense which you, Sir, have taken as your aim, can the world be saved from the catastrophe which has engulfed us. Only this inner harmony can give a state and a nation the impregnable moral force to resist with success the dangers threatening from without. This can never happen by signing empty treaties with powers who follow a principle whose sole aim is in complete opposition to the community of nations. All the treaties relating to unhappy Spain, as also Hitler's former pact with Austria, have proved this only too clearly. Whoever has truck with evil - be it an individual or a nation - eventually must fall a prey to evil; that is an old and undeniable axiom. We must counter the powers who have made an idol of force with the firm and unshaken will arising from our consciousness of what is right. The categorical denial which must be given to the idolators of force, is the power which will break the dictatorships, whose rule is corroded from within in a much stronger way, than the world appears to realize.

You, Sir, are the only statesman who has most convincingly expressed this truth in many of your speeches, and that is the reason why I and countless other Germans look to you.

I know that you have a great number of opponents among your own people, and that this opposition is strongest among the numerically small, but immensely powerful stratum of the lords of finance, whose realization of the needs of our time has been blurred by the lust of possession; they believe, just as they believed in Germany some time ago, that they can save their

possessions by helping to establish a system that scorns the rights of the great majority. As the world is constituted today, this belief is bound to meet with a bitter disappointment. Our "great ones have already learnt this to their cost. One of the most important German industrialists, who like many others and your great financiers now, had given the rising power of National Socialism his material and moral support, at first believed that he would be safeguarding his own interests as well as helping the community by so doing. Now he confesses that he will never be able to forgive himself for this, the greatest error of his life, which has helped to bring such great misery over the German people in all its classes.

At this point, Sir, I have arrived at the part of my letter which entitles me and makes it my duty to turn to you, because I hope to infuse into my words that inner power, which, as I said in the beginning, alone can give life and value to political utterances. To defend oneself against brute force and barbarism must remain a negative action and can only be enduring if it is accompanied by the positive desire to build up a new and better world. If we try to penetrate to the ultimate causes of all happenings, we will not commit the mistake of the primitives, who are inclined to pile all blame onto one side and exonerate the other, assigning to it, as the protagonist of an ideal principle, the absolute moral right to combat the principle of evil and barbarism. The right to act is given to those states, where the liberty and dignity of man is still respected, but only when they are building up new values and putting them in the place of what has superseded. You can see, Sir, by your own struggle, how much must be changed in all the cultured countries of the *earth*.

earth, both in their home - and in their foreign politics, in order to fulfill the demands of a new age.

Most especially the treatment meted out to Germany after the last war constitutes a grave error of the Western Powers. It was still a result of that idolatry of power, whose postulants believe that they can gain the maximum advantages for their own countries by oppressing others. No error goes unavenged, because it breaks the eternal laws by which all forms of existence are determined a priori.

If Germany had not suffered such treatment, there would be no National Socialism today, and therefore no threats to the peace and order of a world which longs for peace, nor the waste of untold millions spent on armaments destined to destroy it. The ruling principle in Germany today is simply the maxim "Power before Right" carried to its extreme logical consequence, a maxim which up till now not only decided international relations, but also the inner life of the nations. You, Sir, obviously follow the maxim "Right before Power" - which may perhaps one day be superseded by an even higher one: "Love - that is community - before Right," just as after century, the New Testament followed the Old Testament. But let us not demand too much and only postulate in politics the maxim which is the logical outcome of a recognition of the moral principle - namely - "Right before Might."

Any attempt to activate this principle must begin there where alone it can succeed - with the individual. Not the laws, even though they may be the best laws imaginable, can change and improve existing conditions, but only the change of heart of the individual who then becomes ready to obey these laws. This must be the Alpha and Omega of all striving for a new order, and every

state that desires to build up and organize a better future must devote all available energies to this aim. The education of the individual and the social service devoted to his well-being, the spreading of the new spirit are the means to succeed.

Our leaders have recognized this principle according to their lights and have devoted all their energies to the conquest of the individual through unceasing influencing of his personality. They employ the enormous apparatus of their unlimited power, as well as all the appliances of modern science in order to spread their ideas. We need not be disappointed because their initial great success is now waning - on the contrary. For the defeat they are now beginning to experience is explained by the fact that their teaching is based on a principle running counter to the laws of God and Nature - on the principles of evil. Nowhere is this more clearly expressed than in the symbol which our leaders have chosen to document their philosophy - the swastika, which they oppose to the true cross, which has symbolized for nearly two thousand years all that humanity held sacred.

We in Germany are witnesses how in the following of the swastika the destructive forces of lies, hatred and envy are at work to undermine the individual from within. And yet we can see a higher power at work, helping the individual to defend himself instinctively against the spoliation of his soul. The defensive powers against the evil principle are growing in the same ratio as the influence of evil grows. We find the same principle at work on the mental plane which we notice on the physical, when the blood produces anti-toxins to the poisons which assail it.

The chief task of humanity is to strengthen these defensive forces in all these nations, who are not yet threatened by the immediate dangers of the fate meted out to them by dictatorships. During the past centuries the old continent of Europe has fulfilled the task of teaching a large part of the world, although such that was evil interpenetrated what was good and positive. Today again Europe is playing the role of the teacher - but alas, in another sense. Today the world must learn from Europe what should not be done, what errors must be avoided so that humanity may survive. The tragic fate which has overtaken the peoples of Central Europe is the writing on the wall for all other nations! If these events have any higher sense and meaning, then it can only be that of a warning to the remainder of mankind. We can already affirm today that this warning has not fallen on deaf ears. Already, in the midst of the nations, different organizations are coming into being - organizations of political, cultural and religious significance who aim at spreading the idea of saving humanity from the material and spiritual ruin that threatens it. This is the beginning of a new order.

To you, Sir, because of the idea I have formed of your personality through your speeches and actions, I turn in the name of millions of unhappy men and women, asking you to make it your task to strengthen this united front against the destruction of humanity, to place yourself at the head of a movement which I would call The Organization of the Principle of Good!

Practically this might be carried through by uniting the existing organizations, that rise like islands out of the vast ocean - uniting them in a higher synthesis in order to strengthen

then. Also, in a wider sense, the spirit of the new age, the spirit of justice, equity and humanity, must be brought to the broad masses of the people by the spoken word. Men can be won by the direct and personal word - the evangel or gospel. The dictators of Central Europe knew this and won the masses by their oratory at the beginning of their careers - unfortunately in order to fill them with an evil spirit and to make them tools for their dark designs - but the annunciation of a new, inner and super-national community of nations must rouse a louder and more enduring echo. Never has the time been more propitious for such an organization of humanity than now, where the disappointed and desperate peoples, especially those of the dictator countries, are pining for a new order. They have been given stones instead of bread to assuage the hunger of their spirit, and the emptiness of their souls has made them more receptive than they have been for centuries towards a world activated with faith in the divine spirit. The advancements of science and the technical achievements of our age are such that man would have the means, in a new order of society, of leading a happier and more carefree life than ever before. To bring about this new age would be the highest and most thankful task of a leader of nations.

How is this apparently insuperable task to be mastered as soon as feasible? All those to whom understanding is given know that humanity has not a great deal of time to do it in. When I consider the immensity of the task, I cannot but recall the eternally true words of the Gospel which Jesus spoke when He saw the multitude and "was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted,

and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." Then it was that He said to His disciples: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he ^{will} send forth labourers into his harvest."

Here again I see something of the miraculous in what is happening in Europe, something that confirms my belief in the divine purpose. For simultaneously with the horrors that take place here, with the spectacle of all that is negative that Europe now presents to the world, the seed of something positive has been sown by providence. The true root of the trouble is being recognized most fully by the very nation that is suffering most from its effects. Speaking in Germany with advanced individuals, no matter of what class or profession, one is surprised at the deep insight they have gained as to the destructiveness of the prevalent regime, although only few know of a positive plan to heal the wounds and build up a new social structure. But among all those men the world will find willing and valuable collaborators for a happier future. All we need is a guiding hand, then the harvest will be brought in. Insight and personal suffering through the evil principle creates the power to be witness and testifier toward the rest of the world, and thus help in organizing the principle of good. That is what we need today.

Help us, Sir, to create this organization, call upon those who are of good will in all countries, and you will find countless helpers. Give that organization your protection, and you will assist the weal of humanity more than any statesman has ever done

in the world.

Despair at the fate of my countrymen, the conviction that it is not yet too late to act, the will to help in preparing a better future and the unflinching faith in a divine principle have decided me to write to you. I pray that you may accept and understand my words in that spirit. It would give me the greatest satisfaction to place the knowledge I have acquired during many years of work and study about the problems of our times, my plans for an organization destined to realize a better future, and especially all my personal, mental and physical force at your disposal in order to realize this idea.

F.W. K-B.

TRANSLATED, COPIED, REVISED by HILDA ROOSEVELT v. KOSCHEMBAH
née BAROVES v. ZEHLITZ-MENKIRCH.

3186
J. W.
W. H. R.

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

1939 JAN 16 AM 11 06

January 11, 1939

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

My dear Mr. President:

Preparations for the survey of refugee colonization possibilities in British Guiana are nearing completion. Dr. Edward C. Ernst, Assistant Director of the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, has been asked by the Advisory Committee to head the mission and has agreed to do so. Lieutenant Colonel Howard U. Nicholas, Chief of Engineers at the Canal Zone, is being made available by the War Department for the mission, which will also include a sanitary engineer to be selected by Dr. Ernst, Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, a Jewish colonization expert and agronomist with wide experience in the Soviet Union, Mr. Emile C. Bateille, a colonization expert with a number of years experience in Canada, a representative of the de Rothschild Committee in London, and perhaps one or two other experts who have not yet been selected. Subject to the approval of the British Government and the ability of the British representative to reach Georgetown by that date, the mission

The President,
The White House.

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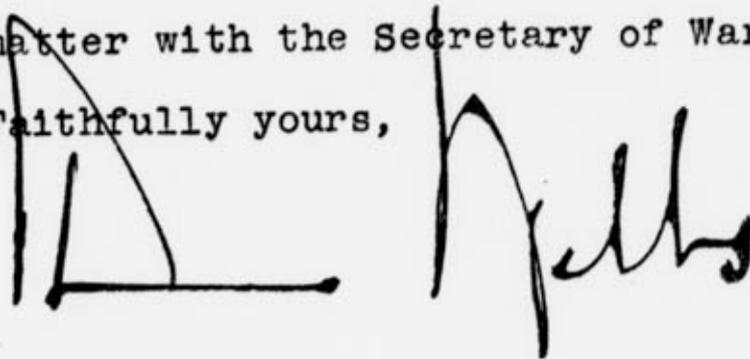
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-2-

mission plans to reach Georgetown by February first.

You may recall that we discussed the possibility of making army amphibian airplanes available for the survey and that we agreed upon the desirability of doing so. If two amphibians were available the resulting saving in time and money would be very considerable. If you favor such action, I should appreciate it if you would authorize me to take up this matter with the Secretary of War.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "W. H. H. H. H.", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned below the typed name "W. H. H. H. H." and the closing "Faithfully yours,".

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State Dept. copy
Published in

Foreign Relations of the United States

1939 Vol. II General, the British
Commonwealth, and Europe

page 65.

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
JAN 14 1939
MR. WELLES

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
1939 JAN 16 AM 48

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 12, 1939

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

3186

My dear Mr. President:

The difficulties of finding areas where mass colonization of refugees from Germany may be physically and politically feasible, and increasing indications that anti-Semitism in European countries other than Germany may shortly enter an acute phase make it increasingly apparent that solution of the Jewish problem in Germany and in Eastern Europe requires the creation of supplemental Jewish homeland.

Of all areas in which very large-scale colonization might be possible if the political obstacles could be overcome, Angola appears, in the opinion of Bowman and other geographic experts, by far the most promising from the physical, climatic, and economic points of view. The possibilities of Angola appear of such importance as to warrant heroic efforts to overcome the political obstacles.

There

The President,
The White House.

D-49-49 REFUGEE/1237

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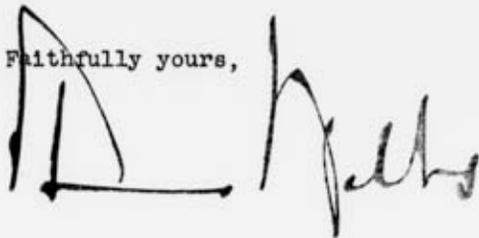
NOTED

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There is attached a draft message to Mr. Myron Taylor which, if you approve, will be telegraphed to him as a further letter of guidance from you.

Believe me,

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "F. D. Roosevelt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "F".

Enclosure:

Draft of message
to Mr. Myron Taylor.

Department of State

BUREAU | Eu
DIVISION |

ENCLOSURE

TO

Letter drafted 1-11-39

ADDRESSED TO

..... The President

Strictly confidential

My dear Mr. Taylor:

You may recall that my letter to you of June 14, 1938, expressed the view that the continuing Intergovernmental Committee should consider, as part of its long-range program, the possibilities of providing for the settlement in suitable areas of persons forced to emigrate from countries other than Germany because of their religious beliefs or racial origins.

I fully appreciate the reasons which led the British and French Governments to oppose any development of that idea at Evian. Any action which might encourage other nations of Eastern Europe to apply pressure upon minority groups would not only be most undesirable in itself but might also jeopardize the specific efforts of the Committee to solve the German refugee problem. No one could be more anxious than I to avoid such a development. Were a suitable area available for the settlement of great numbers of people, however, the situation would be entirely different.

The fact must be faced that there exists in Central and Eastern Europe a racial and religious group of some seven million persons for whom the economic and social future is exceedingly dark. While the Intergovernmental Committee has wisely treated the German refugee problem

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as being one of involuntary emigration regardless of race, creed or political belief, it must be frankly recognized that the larger Eastern European problem is basically a Jewish problem. Acute as the German problem is, it is, I fear, only a precursor of what may be expected if the larger problem is not met before it reaches an acute stage, and indications are rapidly increasing that such a stage may be reached in the near future. The increasing seriousness of the problem may shortly make the political difficulties involved in finding a solution appear trivial in comparison.

I do not believe that the migration of seven million persons from their present homes and their resettlement in other parts of the world is either possible or essential to a solution of the problem. I do believe that the organized emigration from Eastern Europe over a period of years of young persons at the age at which they enter actively into economic competition, and at which they may be expected to marry, is not beyond the bounds of possibility. The resultant decrease in economic pressure, the actual removal over a period of years of a very substantial number of persons, the decrease in the birthrate and the natural operation of the death rate among the remaining older
portion

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portion of the population should reduce the problem to negligible proportions.

It is estimated that such organized emigration would require the movement of perhaps 150,000 persons a year over a period of years. Such a movement of young persons of employable and marriageable age could not take place by means of infiltration, even if the legislation of the receiving countries permitted, without the danger of creating new anti-Semitism. The efforts of the Intergovernmental Committee to develop opportunities for mass settlement indicate the extreme difficulties of finding such opportunities of a nature remotely adequate to meet the need.

I am convinced that the solution of the problem in Germany and throughout Eastern Europe requires the creation of a new Jewish homeland capable of absorbing substantially unlimited Jewish immigration. Even if the political difficulties could be overcome, it is doubtful whether Palestine could absorb and maintain the necessary influx of population, and consideration has accordingly been given to other possible parts of the world.

It goes without saying that any part of the world in which the creation of such a homeland would be politically possible would be to a greater or lesser extent marginal in the economic sense. Many proposals have

been

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been made for large-scale colonization in areas such as Lower California, Madagascar, or the Guianas, but the possibilities of settlement in these areas do not appear sufficient to warrant the belief that the creation of a new Jewish homeland in any of them would be practicable.

Of the less developed areas of the world, Africa appears to offer the greatest hope of future development and the satisfactory maintenance of a greatly increased population. Of the areas in Africa suitable for large-scale white colonization, Angola appears to offer by far the most favorable physical, climatic and economic opportunities.

You may recall that creation of a Jewish homeland in Angola was actively considered in 1912 and 1913 and that a Jewish Colonization Bill concerning Angola was passed unanimously by the Portuguese Chamber of Deputies in 1912. The fact that nothing further came of the project is attributable to various causes, including lack of sufficient organization and the outbreak of the World War, but it does not appear that any question as to the suitability of the area was involved.

I believe that the actual problem of Jewish refugees from Germany and the threatened problem of involuntary

Jewish

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Jewish emigration from other European countries requires an early and determined effort to create a supplemental homeland for that people. I should appreciate your opinion, after you have discussed the matter in the strictest confidence with Lord Winterton and the Prime Minister, as to the practicability of creating it in Angola along the following lines:

Dr. Salazar has on various occasions stated that Portugal would never consider the transfer, by sale or otherwise, of any part of its colonial empire to any other Power. By the creation of a Jewish homeland in Angola, however, it would not become a part of any other colonial empire but rather an autonomous and perhaps eventually independent State. Portugal would not become the victim of the imperialism of any other Power but could, if it desired, make an immeasurable contribution to the cause of humanity and of European stability and peace.

Portugal would naturally be entitled to just compensation for the area, which might take the form of a substantial initial payment by such Powers as might wish to contribute to this cause and additional annual payments over a period of years from the revenues of the new State. Portugal would retain sovereignty over the area until

that

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that period had elapsed. The revenue which Portugal would receive from such an undertaking would far exceed any revenue which it has yet received from Angola or which it might expect to receive at the present rate of development. The Portuguese Government could, in making a magnificent contribution to human welfare and world tranquillity, assure the increased revenue so sorely needed for the advancement of the people of Portugal and the development of their fatherland. Creation of a new Jewish homeland in Angola would undoubtedly increase both the prosperity of the present inhabitants of the colony and its trade with Portugal.

The successful carrying out of such an undertaking would make Dr. Salazar one of the greatest figures in the history of his country and of our times.

Naturally such an undertaking would require the most careful preparation and detailed planning. I have merely outlined my ideas to you in order that you may discuss them with Prime Minister Chamberlain and, if you and he share my views, with Dr. Salazar. Should you deem it advisable to discuss the matter with Dr. Salazar at this time, it occurs to me that you might proceed from England to Italy by boat after the forthcoming meeting of the

Intergovernmental

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Intergovernmental Committee, stopping off in Lisbon for the purpose.

I cannot emphasize too strongly the importance which I attach to the creation of a supplemental Jewish homeland as a step essential to the solution of the Jewish problem or my belief that Angola offers the most favorable facilities for its creation.

January 12, 1939

Respectfully referred to the Secretary
of State for suggested reply.

William D. Hassett
Assistant to MR. EARLY

Let. to Pres., from

Miss Deen Freed,
College Government Assn.,
Skidmore College,
Saratoga Springs, N. Y.

Group of students at Skidmore College is starting an active campaign
to assist German refugees thru scholarship funds & direct relief. Ask
for letter similar to one ~~1/11~~ President wrote to Harvard Committee.