

OF 3186
Political Refugees
1945



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D.C. 25

December 29, 1944

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RECEIVED

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

A group consisting of Professor Joseph Chamberlain, Columbia University, Mrs. M. P. Schauffler, of the Americans Friends Service Committee, Mr. I. L. Asofsay, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, and Joseph Beck, National Refugee Committee, are seeking what they call a solution of the problem presented by the detention of refugees at Oswego, New York. Their plan is to arrange for a number of these refugees to obtain immigrant status by going to Canada under the pre-examination practice, obtain a visa from an American Consul, and then return to the United States under the quota laws. Since this may come to your attention, I am writing you about it.

I believe that under no circumstances should any such arrangement be made. The 982 refugees now at Oswego were brought in by the War Refugee Board, with your approval. You reported to Congress at that time that they were being brought in for military as well as humanitarian reasons, and would be kept temporarily at Oswego and sent back to their homelands upon the termination of the war.

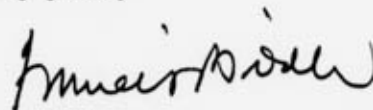
When I testified recently before the Immigration Committee, several Senators wanted to know how these refugees could be brought in legally; and I assured them that they were not brought in under the Immigration laws but simply as refugees for detention in a camp until after the war.

x48-70
x133

2.

I think if any of them were released it would create very serious trouble in Congress where suspicion already prevails that the administration is trying to get around the restrictions of the Immigration laws. It would be taken, and with some justification, as a breach of faith by the Administration.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James A. McGuire". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a prominent "M".

Attorney General

046
hms

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

3186

January 17, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL *x10*

I have yours of December
twenty-ninth and agree wholly
that the refugees at Oswego *x*
ought definitely to go back
as soon as we can find places
for them to go in physical
safety. Most certainly we
ought to keep faith with the *x419*
Congress.

F. D. R.

GRUNDAUM, Isaac, Chairman
Rescue Committee
Jerusalem
February 1, 1945 - not ack.

3186

Cable to the President, asking aid for Jews in concentration camps, etc.,
and that Jewish refugees be permitted to go to Palestine, etc.
Referred by memo, 2/3/45, to the Acting Secretary of State for attention
and appropriate action.

See - 76-C

fmf

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 9, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR

JIM BARNES: *x5276*

Will you look this man up
right away and let me have a report?

F.D.R.

*Handed to Mr
Barnes*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

3186

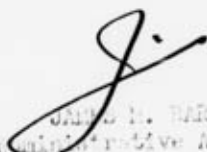
March 10, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

In re: Earl Harrison as Representative
of this Government on the Intergovernmental
Committee on Refugees.

He is a liberal, pleasant, quiet and extremely capable and efficient. He has been a Republican but never overly active. During the last campaign I understand that he headed a Republican Committee for you for President and also for the Democratic candidate in Congress in that district. Senator Guffey objected strenuously to his appointment as Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization. However, I am advised he would offer no objection to his for appointment to this body.


JAMES H. BARNES,
Administrative Assistant
to the President.

FGB

January 24, 1945.

Respectfully referred to the officials of the Department of State for attention and appropriate action

3186

M. C. LATTI
Executive Clerk

Telegrams to the President expressing hope for a successful BIG THREE CONFERENCE and that the hopes of the JEWS for the establishment of a JEWISH COMMONWEALTH in PALESTINE be fulfilled:

- ROTH, BEVERLY, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- ROSENTHAL, BETTY, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- SUDOCK, SHIRLEY, Whittier Hall, Columbia University, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- SCHEIDMAN, ELIHORE, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- LAPIDUS, GERTRUDE, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- GISSER, NORMA, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- KOPFMAN, DAVID, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- SIDORSKY, DAVID, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- COHEN, SEYMOUR J., New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- ZICNA HAPOEL HAMIZRACHI, 4901 14th Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- NEW YORK COUNCIL HAPOEL HAMIZARCHI, 1133 Broadway, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- YAVVEH HAPOEL HAMIZRACHI, 1133 Broadway, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- ZAVIN, J., 562 Alabama Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- DAVIDOWITZ, M., 93 Taylor St., Brooklyn, N. Y., sent from New York City, 1/22/45.

Telegrams to the President urging the President to carry out his promise to help create the JEWISH COMMONWEALTH of PALESTINE for the millions of homeless JEWS:

- FRIED, PEARL, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- LEVINE, RABBI HERSCHEL, JEWISH CENTER OF MT. VERNON, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- NOVECK, RABBI SIMON, Cedarhurst, L. I., New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- HIRMES, DEBORAH, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- WEINBERG, DEBORAH, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- RABINOWITZ, MRS. JACOB G., New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- KESSELMAN, BERNARD, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- ALPERT, PAUL, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- SHEPMAN, MRS. ANNA, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.
- RUBIN, MIRIAM, New York, N. Y., 1/22/45.

STRAUS, MRS. J. LOUIS, President, ST. PAUL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN, St. Paul, Minn., 1/21/45. Telegram stating that the 300 members of St. Paul Council of Jewish Women implore the President to do his utmost to keep the doors of PALESTINE open to JEWISH REFUGEES and to assist in freedom of the people of INDIA.

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FBC

copy initialed 3-13-45
Rel'd to State 3-13

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
March 5, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Designation of Successor to Myron C. Taylor x3865
As Representative of This Government on the
Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees.

In view of the resignation of the Honorable Myron C. Taylor as representative of this Government on the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, the War Refugee Board x577 has proposed the designation of Mr. Earl Harrison, formerly Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, as his successor. I concur in this suggestion.

It is hoped that Mr. Harrison will be able to proceed to London immediately to consult with the members of the Intergovernmental Committee and the British Government with regard to the program and budget of the Committee and to make recommendations to the Department thereon.

The Intergovernmental Committee has requested contributions from the British and United States Governments in the amount of \$4,000,000 each for the calendar year 1945. The War Refugee Board considers this amount to be inadequate to meet the responsibilities of the Intergovernmental Committee, which consist of the care of racial, religious and political refugees who cannot or do not desire to return to their countries of origin or nationality and of finding homes for them. The number of such refugees is estimated to be in excess of one million. The functions of the Committee are supplementary to those of UNRRA, whose responsibilities extend solely to the care and repatriation of those who can be repatriated.

The British and United States Governments are jointly committed, subject to enabling legislation, to the supplying of funds for the operational expenses of the Committee until a master budget can be presented to all the member governments of the Committee for contributions on the Geneva scale.

I shall appreciate your informing me whether the designation of Mr. Harrison in this capacity will meet with your approval.

Joseph P. ...
x20

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oic
JPK

copy initialed 3-15-45
Rtd to State 3-16-45

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
March 14, 1945

7

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Expenses of Mr. Earl Harrison
in his mission to London.

Reference is made to the forthcoming mission to London of Mr. Earl Harrison to consult with the Inter-governmental Committee on Refugees and the British Government with respect to the program of the Committee for the calendar year 1945 and the contribution of this Government toward the expenses of the program. It is considered that expenses to be incurred by him in performing this mission would be within the purview of the appropriation, "International Conferences (Emergency)", contained in the State Department Appropriation Act for 1945, under which your specific approval is required for meeting expenses of participation by the United States in any international activity. #

It is therefore recommended that you indicate your approval of meeting the expenses in connection with Mr. Harrison's mission from this appropriation.

[Handwritten signature]

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x48
x119

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HART, Annie B.G.
Northampton, Mass.
1/11/35 - unack.

3186

Let. enclosing clipping from New York Times entitled: "McDonald Pleads for
Open Palestine." - McDonald, Chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on National
Refugees.

SEE 144-A

emc

DAVIES, Hon. Joseph E.
1/17/45.

The President, by memo., referred for advice as to reply - letter from Juliana, Cape Cod, Mass., 7/19/44, to the President, in re so-called political deportees of the Netherlands, that is political prisoners and Jews, who so far have not had the good fortune of receiving food and clothes parcels, like the prisoners of war of military description. Asks if it would be possible to obtain a permit for sending funds for this purpose from this Country to the International Red Cross in Geneva, Switzerland.

SEE 246

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3186

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MEHLE, J. W.
Exec. Dir., War Refugee Board,
Jan. 19, 1945.

2186

Letter to the President, recommending that the sum of \$1,125,000 be committed for War Refugee Board purposes from the unobligated balance of the \$85,000,000 made available by the Congress through the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, 1941, and the Third Supplemental National Defense Appropriation Act, 1942, continued available until 6/30/45, by the Second Deficiency Appropriation Act, 1944, and now allocated to Treasury Procurement. The purpose of this commitment would be for the procurement and shipment of 300,000 three-kilo food parcels for ultimate distribution by the International Committee of the Red Cross to unassimilated persons in concentration and refugee camps in that part of Europe now held or occupied by the enemy. - - -Mr. Latta on Jan. 19, 1945, referred to the Director of the Bureau of the Budget for recommendation to the President, the above letter.

See - 79 Authorization - Treasury Red Cross

886

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT
Jan. 27, 1945.

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The Director of the Bureau of the Budget wrote re the Food Parcel Program for Internees in Enemy Concentration and Refugee Camps. Attached for the President's signature is a memorandum to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chairman of the American National Red Cross and the Executive Director of the War Refugee Board, authorizing the expenditure of \$1,125,000 from the Foreign War Relief funds allocated to the Treasury Department for the purchase of food parcels to be distributed to unassimilated persons in concentration and refugee camps in territories now held or occupied by the enemy. The British and American Blockade authorities have approved the proposed program and the International Committee of the Red Cross will distribute the parcels. Recommends the approval of this request. - -Presidential Memorandum for Secretary of the Treasury dated Jan. 31, 1945, stating that since the procurement and shipment of the 285,000 food packages for distribution to victims of enemy persecution in Europe, referred to in his memorandum of September 12, 1944, have been successfully completed, the Executive Director of the War Refugee Board has recommended that an additional 300,000 three-kilo food parcels be procured by this Government for similar distribution to unassimilated persons in concentration and refugee camps located in that part of Europe now held or occupied by the enemy. The President directs that certain steps be taken immediately. - The unobligated balances of funds allocated to the Treasury Department from the appropriations for Foreign War Relief, continued available until June 30, 1945, by the Second Deficiency Appropriation Act, 1944, shall be available to the Secretary of the Treasury up to a value of \$1,125,000 to procure commercially these parcels and for reimbursement to the American National Red Cross for the cost of warehousing within the United States and the ultimate transportation of these parcels to the International Committee of the Red Cross. As agreed between Treasury Procurement Division and the War Refugee Board, the Director of Procurement shall arrange for the purchase of these parcels for delivery to the American National Red Cross. The Chairman of the American National Red Cross shall arrange for the warehousing within the United States and shipping of food parcels to the International Committee of the Red Cross for ultimate distribution among such unassimilated persons. The Executive Director of the War Refugee Board shall exercise over-all responsibility for this project. - -Pencil notation - Orig. retd. to Budget 2-6-45.

See - 892

mcg

MEMORANDUM TO MR. HASSETT
Mar. 12, 1945.

3186

Dr. Isador Lubin wrote re transporting the thousand refugees in Rumania to Palestine; draft of proposed letter to Vice Admiral Emory S. Land, War Shipping Admin., for the President's signature; memo of 3/8/45 to Mr. Hassett from Dr. Lubin re above subject, and draft of proposed letter from the President to Emory Land. - Memorandum for the Secretary of State dated Mar. 13, 1945, from Mr. Hassett stating that the accompanying correspondence (the above memo to Mr. Hassett from Dr. Lubin) re refugees in Rumania, with suggested drafts of letters for the President's signature, is respectfully referred to the Secy. of State for recommendation. Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer, Executive Director, War Refugee Board, informs Mr. Hassett that this request does not come within the scope of the Board. - - Memorandum for Mr. Hassett dated Mar. 27, 1945 from Hon. Joseph C. Grew stating that he cannot recommend that either of the letters attached authorizing the use of War Shipping Admin. shipping for the transport of refugees from Rumania to Palestine be signed by the President. Information received by cable from Bucharest confirms a tentative report made to Mr. Hassett earlier by telephone by Mr. Warren that Jewish refugees in Rumania do not have the status of immigrants for Palestine and thus are subject to the issuance of Palestine certificates by the British Passport Control Office in Rumania. Further appears that WSA shipping will not be needed for this purpose in the immediate future because the SS SMYRNA, refitted to carry fifteen hundred passengers, has been held available at Constantza for some weeks by the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to carry such passengers to Palestine as may be in possession of valid certificates and exit permits.

LEM

See - 700

Mr. Hassett sent a memorandum for Dr. Lubin, 4/4/45, stating that the Acting Secretary of State advised that he cannot recommend that either of the letters be signed by the President. The Acting Secretary reports that Jewish refugees in Rumania now have the status of immigrants for Palestine and thus are subject to the issuance of Palestine certificates by the British Passport Control Office in Rumania. They will not be able to leave until all necessary procedures are established.

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,
March 25, 1945.

Mr. Latta, by memo., referred for recommendation to the President - letter of 3/25/45 to the President from William O'Dwyer, Exec. Dir. War Refugee Board; recommending that the sum of \$1,125,000 be allocated to the War Refugee Board for the procurement and shipment of 300,000 three-kilo food parcels for ultimate distribution by the International Committee of the Red Cross to unassimilated persons in concentration and refugee camps in that part of Europe now held or occupied by the enemy.--The American National Red Cross has indicated to the Board that it will act as packer and shipper of an additional 300,000 three-kilo packages.--The Dir. of the Budget, April 4th, sent memo. to the President attaching draft of reply.--The President, April 5th, wrote General O'Dwyer saying his report on the progress which has been made to date by the War Refugee Board in extending aid to the unfortunate persons in concentration and refugee camps within Germany was extremely gratifying. The President said in view of the time element involved, the course of military operations, and the general situation behind German lines, it seems that more adequate aid would be available through Army and UNRRA channels before the parcels contemplated in the proposed program could be distributed. Accordingly, the President does not believe that we should undertake this additional program.

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3/86