

President's Secretary's File Box 73  
Departmental File  
State: Hull, Cordell 1933-37

P.F.  
Miss Cordell Hull  
November 1-3-36  
State

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

April 21, 1936

My dear Mr. President:

With regard to the Inter-Governmental Conference on Jewish and Non-Jewish Refugees coming from Germany, referred to in Mr. Frankfurter's letter to Mr. Moley, and the latter's letter which you sent to me by confidential memorandum of April 20th, I should perhaps state that the Council of the League of Nations has called a conference of the States members of the League, as well as the United States of America and the United States of Brazil, to meet at Geneva on July 2, next. The provisional program of this conference (a copy of which I am appending hereto) contains the following items of discussion:

1. Framing of provisional arrangements concerning the legal status of German refugees.
2. Drafting of a convention determining the status of refugees.
3. Examination of methods of obtaining facilities  
for

The President,

The White House.

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the delivery of civil status and other papers by the authorities of the country of origin.

As you will see, the agenda of the conference calls for discussion only of matters pertaining to the legal status of German and other refugees. As far as this country is concerned, the status of all aliens is determined by law and there is no latitude left to the Executive to discuss questions concerning the legal status of aliens. It does not appear advisable, therefore, for this Government to place itself in the position of even appearing to have any authority or discretion in connection with the status of other than American citizens. We have, in consequence, already informed the Secretary General of the League that this Government does not contemplate participating actively in the conference or in becoming a party to any convention which it may draw up, but will be very glad to have the American Consul in Geneva, or a member of his staff, attend the meetings as an observer.

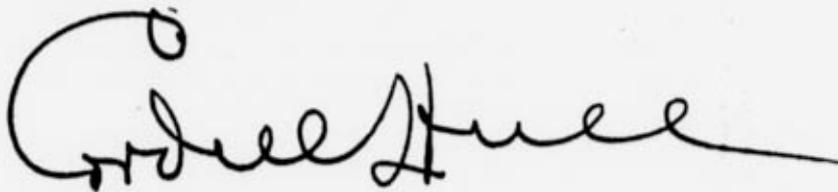
In response to an inquiry on his part, we have informed Professor Joseph P. Chamberlain, who was the American representative on the Governing Body of the High Commission for Refugees from Germany until the recent dissolution of that Body, of our intention to

have

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have an observer from the American Consulate in Geneva attend the conference. Professor Chamberlain, in acknowledging the Department's letter, stated that he understood the position of this Government and that he was glad to learn that the American Consul would attend the conference as an observer.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cordell Hull". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed text "Faithfully yours,".

Enclosure:  
Copy of Agenda,  
as above.