

Summer Welles Papers  
Box 150 Folder 15  
Major Correspondents  
Roosevelt, Franklin July-Sept  
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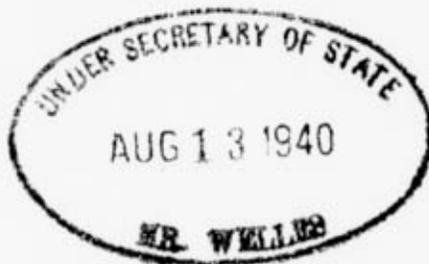
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

August 12, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

Will you speak to me  
about this?

F. D. R.





THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON

August 3, 1940.

[from Cafe]

THE PHOTODUPLICATION SERVICE  
MAY 5 10 00 AM '80

My dear Mr. President,

I am enclosing a letter from Princess von Starhemberg expanding on an idea that she made known to me in my office on July 30. At our interview she told me that in talking with people in the lower income classes she found a good deal of criticism of the bringing here of English children when so many of our own are in want. As you know, I have been very keen for bringing English children here but I also think that the criticism based upon the need to do something for our own poor children should be met if possible. Perhaps there is something to Princess von Starhemberg's idea if it could be worked out. If it has value it would seem to me that a plan should be made and announced quickly as it is better to meet criticism at the beginning before it has become a widespread and deeply-rooted prejudice.

I do not agree that I should be the one to announce any such plan in case that you do not consider it advisable to do so. The Princess is also generous in suggesting Jane as Honorary President of any organization that might be set up. You will understand that this is her own idea which she did not mention during our interview. I have not even mentioned it to Jane and you may consider that the suggestion has not been made.

Sincerely yours,

*Harold Z. Ickes*

Secretary of the Interior.

The President,  
The White House.

Enc.

Hotel Windsor,  
101 West 58th St.,  
New York, N. Y.  
August 2nd, 1940.

Secretary Harold Ickes,  
Department of Interior,  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

Confirming our conversation of July 29th, concerning Poor Children's Day, may I repeat the conversation again.

Having spoken to so many American mothers, who feel hurt because so much attention has been given to the foreign children and nothing has been done for the poor American children - that is why I suggest to have a Poor Children's Day each year. This would not only satisfy American mothers but also the American working man who, in case of war, has to leave his family behind.

This Children's Day should be announced either by the President or you. I would suggest to do it after Labor Day when the schools start. This Day should be held each year on the same date.

There is also another important point: it will bring many votes for the re-election of President Roosevelt, because poor families have lots of children and parents certainly vote for the man who is going to protect their children, and these children include naturalized Americans of all Nations.

This plan could be worked out in conjunction with the W P A. I have designed a red, white and blue button with two children's heads and a star above, to be worn on that day. This will not involve much expense. The cost is only 1-1/3¢ each for the first 10,000 buttons. The next 100,000 can be made for 1¢, etc.

This button should be sold all over the United States on Poor Children's Day. The minimum charge is 10¢ but there is no limit to what one may wish to give.

May I have the honor to ask you to present these suggestions to the President?

A young mother should be the Honorary President of this organization, and I would suggest Mrs. Ickes. Then it would not look like a campaign for the re-election of Mr. Roosevelt.

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The buttons should be distributed to the schools, large factories and plants, department stores, etc. etc. through the local chambers of commerce, and the checks should be made payable either to the W P A or the Children's Bureau in Washington.

The money raised should be used two-thirds for the American Children and one-third should go to the United States Committee for the care of European children.

The Children's Bureau in Washington should have an office handling the funds for the children in need. Mothers who are in need and unable to take care of their children should be able to write and ask the Committee if they could make arrangements to place one or more of their children in American homes, where there are no children or where such children would be welcome.

It would also give them a chance to receive medical attention and children could be sent on vacations to different parts of the country for their health. As we all know, the Nation's future is built up on our own children.

I would appreciate very much to have a reply on this at your earliest convenience, because we should not waste time in starting on this very important work before the beginning of the coming Presidential campaign.

I would further suggest that the office of this Committee should be in Washington as there are so many organizations in New York, but of course I will leave that up to you, and as this is my idea, I would like to put all my time in on it as I know it will be very successful.

Respectfully yours,

*Ernest W. Bush*