
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

**Series 2: “ You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR
and the New Deal**

File No. 1248

1939 October 17

**Address to Officers of the Intergovernmental
Committee**

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT ON
OPENING THE MEETING OF THE OFFICERS
OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE,
AT THE WHITE HOUSE, TUESDAY,
OCTOBER 17, 1939.

I am glad to welcome at the White House Lord Winterton, the Chairman; Sir Herbert Emerson, the Director; Mr. Myron Taylor, the Vice-Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee representing the United States of America, the heads of missions of the Argentine Republic, Brazil, France and the Netherlands; and Mr. James G. McDonald, the Chairman of my Advisory Committee on Political Refugees.

I extend through you to the thirty-two Governments participating in the Intergovernmental Committee and to the private refugee organizations my appreciation for the assistance which has been given to refugees in the period since the meeting at Evian. I hope the work will be carried on with redoubled vigor, and with more positive results.

In March, 1938 it became clear to the world that a point had been reached where private agencies alone could no longer deal with the masses of unfortunate people who had been

driven from their homes. These men, women and children were beating at the gate of any nation which seemed to offer them a haven.

Most of these fellow human beings belonged to the Jewish Race, though many thousands of them belonged to other races and other creeds. The flight from their countries of origin meant chaos for them and great difficulties for other nations which for other reasons -- chiefly economic -- had erected barriers against immigration. Many portions of the world which in earlier years provided areas for immigration had found it necessary to close the doors.

Therefore, a year and a half ago I took the initiative by asking thirty-two governments to cooperate with the Government of the United States in seeking a long range solution of the refugee problem. Because the United States through more than three centuries has been built in great measure by people whose dreams in other lands had been thwarted, it seemed appropriate for us to make possible the meeting at Evian, which was attended

by Mr. Myron C. Taylor as my personal representative.

That meeting made permanent the present Intergovernmental Committee, and since that time this Intergovernmental Committee has greatly helped in the settling of many refugees, in providing temporary refuge for thousands of others and in making important studies toward opening up new places of final settlement in many parts of the world.

I am glad to be able to announce today that active steps have been taken to begin actual settlement, made possible by the generous attitude of the Dominican Government and the Government of the Philippine Commonwealth. This is, I hope, the forerunner of many other similar projects in other nations.

Furthermore, I am glad to note the establishment of a distinguished Anglo-American group of the Coordinating Foundation, which with the help of your Committee will investigate the suitability of other places of settlement for immigrants.

Things were going well, although I must confess slowly, up to the outbreak of the war in Europe. Today we must recognize

that the regular and planned course of refugee work has been of necessity seriously interrupted.

The war means two things.

First, the current work must not be abandoned: It must be redirected. We have with us the problem of helping those individuals and families who are at this moment in countries of refuge and who for the sake of the world and themselves can best be placed in permanent domiciles during the actual course of the war without confusing their lot with the lot of those who in increasing numbers will suffer as a result of the war itself.

That I may call the short range program, and it presents a problem of comparatively small magnitude. In a moment you will see why I say, "comparatively small magnitude." At this moment there are probably not more than two or three hundred thousand refugees who are in dire need and who must as quickly as possible be given opportunity to settle in

other countries where they can make permanent homes.

This is by no means an insoluble task, but it means hard work for all of us from now on -- and not only hard work but a conscientious effort to clear the decks of an old problem -- an existing problem, before the world as a whole is confronted with the new problem involving infinitely more human beings, which will confront us when the present war is over. This last is not a cheerful prospect, but it will be the almost inevitable result of present conflicts.

That is why I specifically urge that this Intergovernmental Committee redouble its efforts. I realize, of course, that Great Britain and France, engaged as they are in a major war, can be asked by those nations which are neutral to do little more than to give a continuance of their sympathy and interest in these days which are so difficult for them. That means that upon the neutral nations there lies an obligation to humanity to carry on the work.

I have suggested that the current task is small in comparison with the future task. The war will come to an end some day; and those of us who are realists know that in its wake the world will face a refugee problem of different character and of infinitely greater magnitude.

Nearly every great war leaves behind it vast numbers of human beings whose roots have been literally torn up. Inevitably there are great numbers of individuals who have lost all family ties -- individuals who find no home to return to, no occupation to resume -- individuals who for many different reasons must seek to rebuild their lives under new environments.

Every war leaves behind it tens of thousands of families who for very many different reasons are compelled to start life anew in other lands.

Economic considerations may affect thousands of families and individuals.

All we can do is to estimate on the reasonable doctrine of chances, that when this ghastly war ends there may be not one million but ten million or twenty million men, women and children belonging to many races and many religions, living in many countries and possibly on several continents, who will enter into the wide picture -- the problem of the human refugee.

I ask, therefore, that as the second great task that lies before this Committee, it start at this time a serious and probably a fairly expansive effort to survey and study definitely and scientifically this geographical and economic problem of resettling several million people in new areas of the earth's surface.

We have been working, up to now, on too small a

scale, and we have failed to apply modern engineering to our task. We know already that there are many comparatively vacant spaces on the earth's surface where from the point of view of climate and natural resources European settlers can live permanently.

Some of these lands have no means of access; some of them require irrigation; most of them require soil and health surveys; all of them present in the process of settlement, economic problems which must be tied in with the economy of existing settled areas.

The possible field of new settlements covers many portions of the African, American and Australasian portions of the globe. It covers millions of square miles situated in comparatively young republics and in colonial possessions or dominions of older nations.

Most of these territories which are inherently

susceptible of colonization by those who performe seek new homes, cannot be developed without at least two or three years of engineering and economic studies. It is neither wise nor fair to send any colonists to them until the engineering and economic surveys have resulted in practical and definite plans.

We hope and we trust that existing wars will terminate quickly; and if that is our hope there is all the more reason for all of us to make ready, beginning today, for the solution of the problem of the refugee. The quicker we begin the undertaking and the quicker we bring it to a reasonable decision, the quicker will we be able to say that we can contribute something to the establishment of world peace.

Gentlemen, that is a challenge to the Intergovernmental Committee -- it is a duty because of the

pressure of need -- it is an opportunity because it gives a chance to take part in the building of new communities for those who need them. Out of the dregs of present disaster we can distill some real achievements in human progress.

This problem involves no one race group -- no one religious faith. It is the problem of all groups and all faiths. It is not enough to indulge in horrified humanitarianism, empty resolutions, golden rhetoric and pious words. We must face it actively if the democratic principle based on respect and human dignity is to survive -- if world order, which rests on security of the individual, is to be restored.

Remembering the words written on the Statue of Liberty, let us lift a lamp beside new golden doors and

build new refuges for the tired, for the poor, for the
huddled masses yearning to be free.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Being read by [unclear]

FOR THE PRESS

HOUD FOR RELEASE

OCTOBER 17, 1939

The following statement of the President on opening the meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee, at the White House, is for release in editions of all newspapers appearing on the street NOT EARLIER than 1:00 P. M., E.S.T., October 17, 1939.

PLEASE SAFEGUARD AGAINST PREMATURE RELEASE.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

I am glad to welcome at the White House Lord Winterbottom, the Chairman; Sir Herbert Emerson, the Director; Mr. Myron Taylor, the Vice-Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee representing the United States of America, the heads of missions of the Argentine Republic, Brazil, France and the Netherlands; and Mr. James G. McDonald, the Chairman of my Advisory Committee on Political Refugees.

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Most of those fellow human beings belonged to the Jewish Race, though many thousands of them belonged to other races and other creeds. The flight from their countries of origin meant chaos for them and great difficulties for other nations which for other reasons -- chiefly economic -- had erected barriers against immigration. Many portions of the world which in earlier years provided areas for immigration had found it necessary to close the doors.

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I have suggested that the current task is small in comparison with the future task. The war will come to an end some day; and those of us who are realists know that in its wake the world will face a refugee problem of different character and of infinitely greater magnitude.

Nearly every great war leaves behind it vast numbers of human beings whose roots have been literally torn up. Inevitably there are great numbers of individuals who have lost all family ties -- individuals who find no home to return to, no occupation to resume -- individuals who for many different reasons must seek to rebuild their lives under new environments.

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Some of these lands have no means of access; some of them require irrigation; most of them require soil and health surveys; all of them present in the process of settlement, economic problems which must be tied in with the economy of existing settled areas.

The possible field of new settlements covers many portions of the African, American and Australasian portions of the globe. It covers millions of square miles situated in comparatively young republics and in colonial possessions or dominions of older nations.

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We hope and we trust that existing wars will terminate quickly; and if that is our hope there is all the more reason for all of us to make ready, beginning today, for the solution of the problem of the refugee. The quicker we begin the undertaking and the quicker we bring it to a reasonable decision, the quicker will we be able to say that we can contribute something to the establishment of world peace.

Gentlemen, that is a challenge to the Intergovernmental Committee -- it is a duty because of the pressure of need -- it is an opportunity because it gives a chance to take part in the building of new communities for those who need them. Out of the drags of present disaster we can distill some real achievements in human progress.

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Remembering the words written on the Statue of Liberty, let us lift a lamp beside new golden doors and build new refuges for the tired, for the poor, for the huddled masses yearning to be free.

Statement of the President on Opening
the Meeting of the Officers of the
Intergovernmental Committee.

The White House, Washington

October 17, 1939.

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Mr. W. F. Trotter,
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~~There was the hard fact, too, that~~ ^{many} portions of the world which ~~had~~ ^{in earlier years} provided areas for immigration had found it necessary to close the doors.

Therefore, a year and a half ago I took the initiative by asking thirty-two governments to cooperate with the Government of the United States in seeking a long range solution of the refugee problem. Because the United States has been built ^{through more than three centuries} in great measure by people whose dreams in other lands had been thwarted, it seemed appropriate for us to make possible the meeting at Evian, which was attended by Mr. Myron C. Taylor as my personal representative.

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Every war leaves behind it tens of thousands of families who for very many different reasons are compelled to start life anew in other lands.

It is unnecessary for us to examine into those reasons; it is unnecessary for us to classify those who must be provided for.

Political effects of war may compel redistribution of populations -- who can tell? Economic considerations may affect thousands of families and individuals.

> All we can do is to estimate on ~~what may well be called~~ the reasonable doctrine of chances, that when this ghastly war ends there may be not one million but ten million or twenty million men, women and children belonging to many races and many religions, living in many countries and possibly on several continents, who will enter into the ~~wide~~ picture ~~that may be United in broad terms~~ the problem of the human refugee.

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The field of new settlements covers many portions of the African, American and Australasian portions of the globe. It covers millions of square miles situated in comparatively young republics and in colonial possessions or dominions of older nations.

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Most of these fellow human beings belonged to the Jewish Race, though many thousands of them belonged to other races and other creeds. The flight from their countries of origin meant chaos for them and great difficulties for other nations which for other reasons -- chiefly economic -- had erected barriers against immigration.

There was the hard fact, too, that many portions of the world which had previously provided areas for immigration had found it necessary to close the doors.

Therefore, a year and a half ago I took the initiative by asking thirty-two governments to cooperate with the Government of the United States in seeking a long range solution of the Refugee problem. Because the United States has been built in greater measure by people whose dreams in other lands had been thwarted it seemed appropriate for us to make possible the meeting at Evian, which was attended by Mr. Myron C. Taylor as my personal representative.

That meeting made permanent the present Intergovernmental Committee, and since that time this Intergovernmental Committee

has greatly helped in the settling of many refugees, in providing temporary refuge for thousands of others and in the important studies toward opening up new places of final settlement in many parts of the world.

I am glad to be able to announce today that active steps have been taken to begin actual settlement, made possible by the generous attitude of the Dominican Government and the Government of the Philippine Commonwealth. This is, I hope, the forerunner of many other similar projects in other nations.

Furthermore, I am glad to note the establishment ^{b4} ~~of a~~ distinguished Anglo-American group of the Coordinating Foundation, which with the help of your Committee will investigate the suitability of places of settlement for immigrants.

Things were going well, although I must confess slowly, up to the outbreak of the war in Europe. We may well recognize that the regular and planned course of refugee work has been of necessity seriously interrupted.

The war means two things.

One, the work must not be abandoned: It must be redirected. We have with us today the problem of helping those individuals

and families who are at this moment in countries of refuge and who for the sake of the world and themselves can best be placed in permanent domiciles during the actual course of the war without confusing their lot with the lot of those who in increasing numbers will suffer as a result of the war itself.

That I may call the shortrange program and it presents a problem of comparatively small magnitude. In a moment you will see why I say, "comparatively small magnitude." At this moment there are probably not more than two or three hundred thousand refugees who are in dire need and who must as quickly as possible be given opportunity to settle in other countries where they can make permanent homes.

This is by no means an insoluble task but it means hard work for all of us from now on -- and not only hard work but a conscientious effort to clear the decks of an old problem -- an existing problem, before the world as a whole is confronted with the new problem involving infinitely more human beings, which will confront us when the present war is over. This last is not a cheerful prospect, but it will be the almost inevitable result of present conflicts.

That is why I specifically urge that this Intergovernmental Committee redouble its efforts. I realize, of course, that

Great Britain and France, engaged as they are in a major war, can be asked by those nations which are neutral to do little more than to give a continuance of their sympathy and interest in these days which are so difficult for them. That means that upon the neutral nations there lies an obligation to humanity to carry on the work.

I have suggested that the current task is small in comparison with the future task. The war will come to an end some day; and those of us who are realists know that in its wake the world will face a refugee problem of different character and of infinitely greater magnitude. Nearly every great war leaves in its wake vast numbers of human beings whose roots have been literally torn up. Inevitably there are great numbers of individuals who have lost all family ties -- individuals who find no home to return to, nor occupation to resume -- individuals who for many different reasons must seek to rebuild their lives under new environments.

Every war leaves behind it tens of thousands of families who for very many different reasons are compelled to start life anew in other lands.

It is unnecessary for us to examine into those reasons; it is unnecessary for us to classify those who must be provided for

Political effects of war may compel redistribution of populations -- who can help? Economic considerations may affect thousands of families and individuals.

All we can do is to estimate on what may well be called the reasonable doctrine of chances, that when this ghastly war ends there may be not one million but ten million or twenty million men, women and children belonging to many races and many religions, living in many countries and possibly on several continents, who will enter into the picture that may be called in broad terms the problem of the human refugees.

I ask, therefore, that as the second great task that lies before this Committee, that it start at this time a serious and probably a fairly expensive effort to survey and study definitely and scientifically this geographical and economic problem of resettling a great many million people in new areas of the earth's surface.

We have been working, up to now, on too small a scale and we have failed to apply modern engineering to our task. We know already that there are many comparatively vacant spaces on the earth's surface where from the point of view of climate and natural resources European settlers can live permanently.

Some of these lands have no means of access; some of them require irrigation; most of them require soil surveys; all of them present in the process of settlement, economic problems which must be tied in with the economy of existing settled areas.

The field of new settlements covers many portions of the African, American and Australasian portions of the globe. It covers millions of square miles situated in comparatively young republics and in colonial possessions or dominions of older nations.

Most of these territories which are inherently susceptible of colonization by those who perforce seek new homes, cannot be developed without at least two or three years of engineering and economic studies. It is neither wise nor fair to

send any colonists to them until the engineering and the economics have resulted in practical and definite plans.

We hope and we trust that existing wars will terminate quickly; and if that is our hope there is all the more reason for all of us to make ready, beginning today, for the solution of the problem of the refugee. The quicker we begin the undertaking and the quicker we bring it to a reasonable decision, the quicker will we be able to say that we can contribute something to the solution of world peace.

Gentlemen, that is a challenge to the Intergovernmental Committee -- it is a duty because of the pressure of need -- it is an opportunity because it gives a chance to take part in the building of new communities for those who need them. Out of the dregs of present disaster we can distill some real achievements in human progress.

This problem involves no one race group -- no one religious faith. It is the problem of all groups and all faiths. It is not enough to indulge in horrified humanitarianism, empty resolutions, golden rhetoric and pious words. We must face it

actively if the democratic principle based on respect and
human dignity is to survive -- if world order, which rests on
security of the individual, is to be restored.

Remembering the words written on the Statue of Liberty,
let us lift a lamp beside new golden doors and build new
refuges for the tired, for the poor, for the huddled masses
yearning to be free.



THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

Oct-5-1937

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

Mr. Cohen's memorandum deals with the three following points: (1) an invitation should be extended to Mr. James G. McDonald, Chairman of your Advisory Committee on Political Refugees, to attend the meeting at the White House; (2) the meeting should take place; (3) the State Department should be asked for its recommendations with regard to the program and the substance of the meeting.

On the second point you have already given your view, namely, that the meeting should take place on October 16 and 17. Mr. McDonald, Mr. Taylor and the Governments represented by officers of the Committee have been informed to this effect.

With regard to the first point, that an invitation should be extended to Mr. McDonald, it is our view that the invitation should be extended as recognition not only of Mr. McDonald but of the Advisory Committee as well.

Regarding point three, it is important that we should be informed as soon as possible of your intentions in respect of the program of the meeting. In this connection,

connection, I understand that Mr. Taylor has written you suggesting that there should be (a) an opening meeting at the White House on October 16, at which you will make a statement; (b) a business meeting in the conference room at the State Department on October 17; and (c) a dinner at the White House in honor of Lord Winterton and the other officers on the evening of October 17. It is important that we learn your views regarding this proposed program as soon as possible in order that other functions, such as a luncheon at the British Embassy, may be arranged. With regard to the substance of the meeting I enclose a first draft of suggestions for the guidance of the American representative.

Parenthetically, you may be interested to know that we were informed this morning that steps were taken yesterday at New York to set up the corporation which will finance and organize the projected settlement in the Dominican Republic. Mr. Lessing Rosenwald put up \$50,000; Mr. James N. Rosenberg has also put up \$50,000, and the Joint Distribution Committee, at Mr. Baerwald's behest, has advanced an additional \$100,000 towards the initial subscription. We have suggested that this information be withheld from public release until the meeting in order that we may have something concrete to announce.

CH

FIRST DRAFT

Suggestions for the White House Meeting
October 16

There follow certain considerations and suggestions for the guidance of the American representative at the meeting of the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee which is scheduled to take place at the White House on October 16 and 17, 1939.

(1) The outbreak of war in Europe has created a new situation which calls for a fresh approach to the problem of refugees. This does not mean that the important work in which the Intergovernmental Committee has been engaged for more than one year should be interrupted or abandoned; rather, it should be redirected. The refugee problem is a continuing one, not a temporary emergency. It is a problem which concerns the community as a whole; the cure cannot be left to private initiative alone. If it is to be solved, it requires the execution by the Participating Governments, which accepted the principle at Evian, of a long-range program, adequately financed by private funds, within the framework of the existing migration laws and practices of these Governments.

(2) It is evident that, in view of the hostilities, the emigration of persons from Germany (including Austria and Sudetenland), in accordance with the bases laid down

down at Evian and the plans discussed on behalf of the Committee with Mr. Wohlthat during the winter of 1939, is not highly practicable. Aside from the facts (a) that these people have virtually no means of egress from the Reich; (b) that their passages to places of resettlement can no longer be arranged and paid for in marks on German vessels, and (c) that it will not be feasible to effect purchases for settlement projects from the portion of the wealth of the involuntary emigrants which was to have been set aside by the German Government, in the projected Internal Trust, it is understood that all able-bodied citizens of both sexes inside Germany have been mobilized for war work with the consequence that only dependents, that is, children and old people, could be evacuated to other lands where they would become objects of charity at a time when charitable resources are strained to the utmost.

(3) While recognizing that there are serious difficulties in the way of emigrating persons from Germany, this Government would not wish to associate itself with any public statement which would have the effect of annulling Paragraph 8, Part I, of the Resolution adopted by the Intergovernmental Committee at Evian on July 14, 1938, which defines the persons coming within the scope of the Committee. This Government desires to make it

clear

clear that persons in Germany who can comply with American regulations and are duly granted visas will continue to be admitted to the United States within the limits of the existing quota. There can be, however, no objection on our part if belligerent Governments which are participants in the Committee wish to make unilateral statements to the effect that so far as they are concerned Paragraph 8, Part I, is suspended for the duration of the war.

(4) There remain from the group with which the Committee at this time is exclusively mandated to deal--that is, refugees from Germany (including Austria and Sudetenland)--the persons in places of refuge, notably in England, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries. Specific information should be requested from the Governments of these countries as to (a) the numbers of persons in each country of refuge; (b) their status in view of war conditions; (c) restrictions upon their freedom, circulation and employment; (d) the extent to which they are absorbed in war services, and (e) the desire of the Governments of these countries to emigrate these persons. On the basis of the information which is thus obtained there should be formulated by the Director a specific plan for the resettlement of these persons.

(5) It is the considered view of this Government

that

that decisions regarding resettlement, with regard to specific resettlement projects and in respect of the financing of settlement projects, should be referred to the Coordinating Foundation which has been set up for the purpose of advising in these matters. This Government is hopeful that opportunities for large-scale resettlement will be found without too great delay. In the meantime it will continue to support the private organizations engaged in the work of resettlement and facilitate the task of such specific corporations as are established to finance particular settlement projects.

(6) It is the view of this Government that the officers of the Intergovernmental Committee should consider the possibility of extending the scope of the Committee to include categories of refugees other than those coming from Germany. These would include, notably, victims of the war in Europe and Spanish refugees. In this connection it is the view of this Government that the Committee is not dealing with a passing phenomenon but with a broad problem of population pressure which manifests itself in the social, economic and political fields with ever-increasing intensity and in a world which still is unevenly populated. This consideration should be laid before the full Committee by circular and the participating

participating Governments should be invited to notify the Secretary of the Committee whether in their view the scope of the Committee's activity should be extended and to what extent.

(7) This Government is gratified to learn that Sir Herbert Emerson is willing to remain as Director of the Committee under certain conditions. It is recognized that Sir Herbert should have a well-qualified assistant. Since, however, the immediate problem is that of emigrating persons from countries of refuge to places of permanent settlement it is believed that an experienced Assistant Director should be employed who is a national of one of the neutral countries of refuge.

(8) It is hoped that the Chairman of the British delegation, Lord Winterton, will remain as Chairman of the Committee. It is to be noted that Mr. Theodore Achilles, now attached to the American Embassy at London, will remain in direct relationship with the Chairman and will serve as intermediary between the Chairman and the Secretary.

(9) Should it eventuate that Lord Winterton is unable, or unwilling, to remain as Chairman, this Government is hopeful that the British Government will name a successor as Chairman of its delegation to the Intergovernmental Committee who would automatically become Chairman of the Committee.

Oct. 5-1937

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DRAFT

Statement of the President on Opening
the Meeting of the Officers of the
Intergovernmental Committee

The White House, Washington

October 17, 1939

I am glad to welcome at the White House Lord Winter-
ton, the Chairman; Sir Herbert Emerson, the Director;
and the Vice-Chairman of the Intergovernmental Committee
representing the United States of America, the Argentine
Republic, Brazil, France and the Netherlands, as also
Monsieur Paul van Zeeland, the President of the Coordinating
Foundation, and Mr. James G. McDonald, the Chairman of
my Advisory Committee on Political Refugees. I extend
through you to the thirty-two Governments participating
in the Intergovernmental Committee and to the private
refugee organizations my appreciation for the assistance
which has been given to refugees in the period since the
meeting at Evian. I hope the work will be carried on with
redoubled vigor, with greater vision and with more positive
results.

A.

In March, 1938, I took the initiative of calling
upon thirty-two Governments to cooperate with the Govern-
ment of the United States of America in seeking a basic,
long-range solution of the refugee problem. It was clear
to me then that a point had been reached where private
agencies alone could no longer deal with the masses of
unfortunate people who had been driven from their homes
and were beating at the gates of all countries which seemed
to offer a haven. Plainly governmental action was needed
if new homes were to be found, in time, for thousands of

our

our fellow human beings, of many races, many creeds, and all walks of life, who were being cast adrift to rot or to find refuge as and where they could.

The flight of these unwanted people from their countries of origin caused plain chaos. Barriers everywhere, restrictions both of quality and number, economic impediments of all kinds lay between them and any resting place. There was the hard fact that those portions of the world which previously provided areas for immigration were filled up, and remaining opportunity was slight.

This country was built in great measure out of the thwarted dreams of other lands. The forefathers of most of us came originally as refugees. Our community could not sit by idly and see these pathetic exiles perish. Our people could not avert their eyes and pass by on the other side of the road. The delegates of the Governments which met at Evian appreciated the urgency and magnitude of the problem and the spirit in which it was presented by my personal representative, Mr. Myron C. Taylor. Accordingly, the Intergovernmental Committee was made permanent. An executive office was set up with a Director and Vice-Director. The Director was instructed to negotiate with the German Government to alleviate disorderly expulsions then in progress and to set up conditions allowing at least orderly emigration. He was authorized to approach the Governments of the countries of refuge and settlement with a view to developing opportunities of permanent resettlement.

I shall not review in detail the negotiations which have

have taken place since Evian, first under Mr. George Rublee's direction, subsequently under the direction of Sir Herbert Emerson.

Progress was made in the conversations with the German authorities towards formulating policies which would alleviate the situation at its origin.

In the countries of temporary refuge efforts were coordinated to maintain the refugees in suitable conditions while they were in temporary asylum.

There has been at least a beginning in the work of opening up new places of final settlement and in keeping open doors to the regular flow of infiltration. Commissions of Inquiry have visited, investigated and reported on opportunities for settlement in the Dominican Republic, British Guiana, Northern Rhodesia and the Phillipines.

I take great pleasure in announcing today that active steps have been taken to begin the work on the settlement projects which have been made possible by the generous attitude of the Dominican Government and the Government of the Philippine Commonwealth. It is a source of special gratification that, due to the enterprise and generosity of a group of far-seeing Americans, the refugee stream which has been dammed too long will soon begin to flow. This should not only relieve the immediate tension but serve as an inspiration to further constructive effort.

There was another and a very notable achievement in this past year to which I wish to call particular attention. This was the establishment by a distinguished

Anglo-

Anglo-American group of the Coordinating Foundation which, in conjunction with the Intergovernmental Committee, will work with individuals and organizations to investigate the suitability of places of settlement for involuntary emigrants and further resettlement plans. I attach great importance to the Foundation and am confident that it will play an important role in promoting a solution of the refugee problem.

So much has been done. Let us look into the future and see what must be done. Today the paramount factor in the situation is the outbreak of war. This has interrupted the regular course of refugee work. The important task on which the Intergovernmental Committee has been engaged for more than one year should not be abandoned; but it must be redirected. The refugee problem is a continuing one, not a temporary emergency, and one which concerns the community as a whole. War is no excuse for not solving it, for when human beings suffer and die, what is almost worse, are condemned to life without hope, everything we hold dear is endangered.

Now the solution of the problem calls for, first, a short-range program for dealing with the persons who are now in countries of refuge; second, a long-range program for dealing with the broader problem of resettling not only the victims of persecution but the victims of war and civil conflict.

The short-range program, as I see it, involves the resettlement of somewhat more than 100,000 persons who are now in countries of temporary refuge, and who need opportunity to resume a useful life. Many of these people will have opportunities of establishing themselves, by

normal processes of infiltration, in new homes such as this country which, under its quota laws, offers a haven to a substantial number of refugees each year. Others will have to be established in the special places of settlement which are being opened up for them. I think it especially urgent that the respective Corporations should be set up for each particular settlement project as rapidly as possible.

long-range
War may interrupt the general solution; but the delay may and must be made useful. What is needed, as I see it, is essentially engineering. Among the reports of possible solutions are some which say "We have found the land, but there is no means of access. Until roads and facilities are built, little can be done". This is the time for getting at that task. If areas can be decided upon, now is the time to arrange for the necessary detailed surveys, the planning of the facilities needed, the arrangements required to start building those facilities which make available new home lands. This is at once a duty and an opportunity; a duty, because of the pressure of need; an opportunity, because it gives the chance -- which rarely comes -- to play a part in the building of new countries. Perhaps you gentlemen in undertaking this work through the Foundation and the various corporations, may show us a method of building new countries which will be an advance on our present civilization. Out of the drags of this disaster we may be able to distill some real achievements in human progress. In the course of alleviating the immediate situation, and opening the dam to at least a minimum of resettlement, you may find it possible to use the work as a preliminary development of plans for large scale settlement in substantial territory, with generous financing, illuminated by

by imaginative planning and human ingenuity. It has been done before, with far less resources than you have to offer. It can and must be done anew.

Since this Committee is not dealing with a passing phenomenon, nor even with the sorrow of a particular race, it must consider widening its mandate. There are other categories of exiles who will be forced to start their lives again in a new land. Naturally, consultation with governments is needed to make fundamental change in the scope of the Committee's work; but I hope this consultation may take place. We shall have the problem of Catholic exiles, of men exiled for reasons of religion or of race, of civil conflict, or of sheer mass movements as a result of the upheaval in Europe. It is necessary for the safety of all to consider the problem in its largest lines. This is no longer the problem of one race group. It is the problem of all groups and all faiths.

I cannot close without stressing once more the poignancy of the refugee problem. It is a challenge to the Western civilized world. It is not enough to indulge in horrified humanitarianism, empty resolutions, golden rhetoric and pious words. This is reality; and it must be faced if the democratic principle based on respect for human dignity is to survive; and if world order, which rests on security of the individual, is to be restored.

Remembering the words written on the Statue of Liberty, let us lift a lamp beside new golden doors and build new refuges for the tired, for the poor, for the huddled masses yearning to be free.