

FUNDS FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO ESCAPED FROM ENEMY TERRITORY

000146

CROSS REFERENCE ON .....

FOR:

Amendment to this License . . . . .

Extension of this License . . . . .

Renewal of this License . . . . .

Correspondence concerning this application .

Other (Specify)

For Project No. 17

"REPATRIATION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS FROM EUROPE"

SEE: COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL REFUGEE PROBLEMS

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JUL 15 1944

TO: Mr. Berle ✓

FROM: J. W. Pehle

Attached hereto is a further memorandum dealing with the problem of private funds versus public funds for the repatriation of American citizens, a subject we discussed some time ago.

L.S.P.  
LSLessor:tnh 7-14-44

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JUL 11 1944

Mr. Penle

L. S. Lesser

Reference is made to memorandum dated April 25, 1944, left by you with Mr. Berle on May 3, 1944, and the memorandum of the Special Division addressed to Mr. Berle under date of May 5, 1944 in response thereto. You will recall that these memoranda deal with the availability in neutral countries of official funds to assist destitute nationals of the United States who have escaped from enemy-controlled areas.

My original memorandum was based upon statements of a general character made by a responsible officer of a voluntary agency. Since receiving the memorandum of the Special Division, he has at my request made available to us more detailed information. Thus, a letter from the Portuguese representative of an American voluntary agency dated September 14, 1941 states:

\*\*\*this has been a fearful morning with American citizen cases. Eight or nine have been in here, most of whom have their passage or most of it on the Exoambion sailing today. They are all sent to us by the American Consulate and they need either a little more money for their passage or the money for their hotel bills or exit visas\*\*\*.

Then follows a list of seven persons assisted: John Guaiiani; John Grozine; Nicholas Giordano; Mary Valanos; Desolina Frangoulis; Charles Politis; Z. Rychny. The letter continues:

\*\*\*this is a very useful service in view of the fact that our Consulate apparently has no funds at all, but is a service we cannot keep up at this end indefinitely unless you keep replenishing our exchequer. . . this gets some more American citizens out of the danger zone and in the cases of the men it gives several possible soldiers for Uncle Sam's army. They are all of military age."

Subsequent to June 6, 1944 the representative of the same American voluntary agency in a neutral country cabled in part as follows:  
SINCE JANUARY FIRST REPATRIATED AMERICANS JOSEPH COSTA COMMA JOSE PEDRO SUAREZ COMMA TOMAS SANCHEZ GRANILLA COMMA MARTHA CONZALEZ COMMA RAFAEL

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MORETTA COMMA MINOS GENERALES COMMA DAPHNE CASTRILLON ET CHILD COMMA  
JESSE RHINEHARDT MISSIONARY WITH CANCEL ALL WAR VICTIMS OUR AID ASKED  
BY CONSULATES.

In addition to the foregoing, domestic representatives of  
another American voluntary agency state under date of June 2, 1944  
that they

\*\*\*have plenty of evidence that there are still American  
citizens penniless in Europe who are dependent upon private  
agencies for the funds necessary for repatriation in spite  
of the fact that representatives\*\*\*abroad have repeatedly  
informed our consulates that they could not properly use  
their funds contributed for foreign relief service in the  
repatriation of American citizens, nonetheless the consulates  
have continued to leave such cases to\*\*\*private/ agencies,  
since they have no government funds to work with and had to  
refuse the applicants without offering possible alternatives".

A similar problem seems to have arisen in connection with the  
repatriation of young men born in the United States but whose foreign  
parents brought them back to the country of their (the parents') origin.  
A number of such persons desire to return to the United States to elect  
American citizenship and subject themselves to the draft. It is reliably  
reported our consular officers refer such persons to American voluntary  
agencies for the wherewithal to pay for their documentation and passage,  
at a cost of \$45 to \$90 each.

The foregoing is by no means exhaustive but I think it suffi-  
cient to show that funds that ought to be available for other uses are  
to some extent being used for the assistance of American citizens in  
circumstances where official funds might properly be expected to fill  
the breach.

LSLesser:deh 7/11/44

*Included copy 7/11/44  
Received in files*

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TO: Mr. Pehle

FROM: L. S. Lesser

With reference to my memorandum of April 25, 1944, the following details have been made available to us by an American welfare organization in regard to the problem of financial assistance to needy U. S. citizens <sup>abroad,</sup> These details cover the situation in Portugal only and <sup>necessarily</sup> do not reveal the full picture even in that country.

In December 1940, three children who were citizens of the United States were brought to the United States, with their traveling expenses assumed by the Unitarian Service Committee.

In September 1941, several American citizens desiring to sail to the United States and not possessing sufficient funds for travel, <sup>for</sup> Portuguese exit visas, <sup>for</sup> or hotel bills, were referred by the U. S. consulate in Lisbon to the Unitarian Service Committee, which has made available to them varying amounts. The men included in this group were all of military age and presumably about to enter the armed forces of the United States.

Since January 1, 1944, U. S. consulates requested the financial aid of the Unitarian Service Committee on behalf of nine repatriated United States citizens <sup>needing repatriation.</sup>

Similarly, United States citizens are being referred by the United States consulates in Portugal to the local representatives of the American Friends' Service Committee, and this committee, together with the HICEM, had to make outlays for the passage of these people to the United States as well as for their passport and other fees.

By spending ~~this~~ part of their funds on the repatriation of U. S. citizens, these agencies have less money left for the rescue and aid to

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victims of enemy oppression.

In the case of Portugal, the American citizens thus supported by private welfare organizations are predominantly American-born children of Portuguese parents who, unless they act ~~in time~~ <sup>in time</sup> to retain their citizenship would lose it <sup>(under sections 801 and following of title 8, U. S. Code).</sup> <sup>present</sup> Nevertheless, their <sup>a</sup> status as citizens of this country is not questioned, and it is not discernible why, if funds are available to U. S. consuls abroad for the purpose of repatriation of citizens, such persons should not benefit from such funds but should become <sup>a</sup> burden on welfare organizations.

Baerlin

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WILLIAM EMERSON, CHAIRMAN  
SETH T. GANO, VICE-CHAIRMAN

EDWARD B. WITTE, TREASURER  
ALFRED F. WHITMAN, SECRETARY

## Unitarian Service Committee

25 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Mass.

TELEPHONE CAPITOL 3660

ROBERT C. DEXTER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHARLES R. JOY  
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



REGISTERED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S  
WAR RELIEF CONTROL BOARD  
ENDORSED BY NATIONAL WAR FUND  
THROUGH REFUGEE RELIEF  
TRUSTEES, INC.

June 30, 1944

Mr. Lawrence F. Lesser  
War Refugee Board  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

Sometime ago you asked me to give you more definite details about the repatriation of United States citizens in Portugal and Spain at the expense of the service committees. I have been gathering the information from the files and by cables to Lisbon since that time.

The problem is not a new one to us. In December 1940 our Committee was instrumental in bringing a company of children to the United States. Three of the twenty-five children were United States citizens, and as the United States Committee for the Care of European Children could not under its charter finance expenses of United States citizens, the Unitarian Service Committee had to assume the charges for their traveling expenses from Marseilles to New York.

A letter from Dr. Dexter dated September 14, 1941, from Lisbon states "this has been a fearful morning with American citizen cases. Eight or nine have been in here, most of whom have their passage or most of it on the Excambion sailing today. They are all send to us by the American Consulate and they need either a little more money for their passage or the money for their hotel bills or exit visas from Portugal." Then follows this list of names and the amounts spent by our Committee on each:

John Gualiani	\$48.50
John Grozine	\$25.00
Nicholas Giordano	\$10.00
Mary Valanos	\$20.00
Despina Frangoulis	\$20.00
Charles Politis	\$30.00
Z. Rychly	\$22.50



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Relief Center

~~Dr. Dexter goes on~~ "this is a very useful service in view of the fact that our Consulate apparently has no funds at all, but is a service we cannot keep up at this end indefinitely unless you keep replenishing our exchequer. . .this gets some more American citizens out of the danger zone and in the cases of the men it gives several possible soldiers for Uncle Sam's army. They are all of military age." /a

We cabled Lisbon on June 6, 1944, to receive latest information as follows: CABLE RECENT INSTANCES OUR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REPATRIATION U. S. CITIZENS." In reply the following cable was received: SINCE JANUARY FIRST REPATRIATED AMERICANS JOSEPH COSTA COMMA JOSE PEDRO SUAREZ COMMA TOMASA SANCHEZ GRANELLA COMMA MEDINA GONZALEZ COMMA RAFAEL MORETTA COMMA MINOS GENERALES COMMA DAPHNE CASTRILLON ET CHILD COMMA JESSE RHINEHARDT MISSIONARY WITH CANCEL ALL WAR VICTIMS OUR AID ASKED BY CONSULATES. /b

The Quakers have had a similar long-continuing problem and in a letter of June 2, 1944, Mrs. Marjorie Schaufliker says that they have plenty of evidence that there are still American citizens penniless in Europe who are dependent upon private agencies for the funds necessary for repatriation. In spite of the fact that representatives of the Quakers abroad have repeatedly informed our Consulates that they could not properly use their funds contributed for foreign relief service in the repatriation of American citizens, nonetheless the consuls have continued to refer such cases to the Quakers and other agencies, since they have no government funds to work with and had to refuse the applicants without offering possible alternatives. A letter from Philip Conard, the Quaker Director in Lisbon whom I know very well, dated April 17, 1944, says "a problem that showed up sometime back as a very small affair shows signs of getting so serious that we should like to lay it before you.

"It is the matter of American-born young folks of Portuguese parents who now want to go to the United States to save their nationality. For the young men it is in line, as I understand it, with draft regulations. In many cases these people have nothing - not even enough to pay for their American passports. The Consul sends them to one of the Agencies to see about funds for documentation and passage. Howard had worked out a plan with Hicem whereby we would pay for the documents and Hicem the passage. This puts the heavier burden by far on Hicem, but there is always the possibility that some relative can be located in America able and willing to share the expense.

"As long as it was a very occasional case, it was treated by us as a "Relief" item and covered in the monthly budget. But recently the numbers have been such that it makes a considerable item.

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- "The minimum needs are:
1. Portuguese passport, birth certificate and other documentation Esc. 600 to 800
  2. American passport 100 to 234
  3. Consul cables 100 to 200
- 1234\$
- or say \$50.
4. For boys there is a military license also. 1000 or \$40.

so we have to count on from \$45 to \$90 per person. As Hicem says, American agencies working under American licenses, can hardly refuse to help young Americans stranded here, although our chief purpose is to help war victims - which these are not.

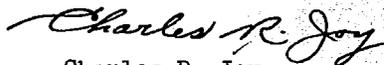
"I note that this month of February we have paid for three of these cases Esc. 2948\$70 (about \$160) and have agreed to help three more. We shall have to limit the amount we can give to this call but what I should like is some guidance as to whether it falls within our field at all. We shall appreciate your thought on it."

In replying to this letter from Lisbon, the Quaker headquarters in Philadelphia advised Mr. Conard that a continuing burden of this sort was not appropriate for an office doing refugee work. The headquarters authorized Mr. Conard to continue at his discretion to aid one or two cases a month if the burden seemed to promise to decrease to the vanishing point within six months, but if in his judgment it was wiser to discontinue the service completely at once they would accept his decision to that effect.

The Quakers feel just as we Unitarians feel that we cannot as a private agency continue to give this type of assistance and we would warmly welcome an appropriation from the American government funds to help in the repatriation of American citizens who desire to return to their own country.

I hope this gives you the specific information you need. Count on me for any possible further assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Charles R. Joy  
Acting Executive Director

CRT:F

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*File*

COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL REFUGEE PROBLEMS

144 Bleecker Street, New York 12, N. Y.

Algonquin 4 0722

May 29, 1944

Mr. Laurence S. Lesser  
War Refugee Board  
Treasury Department  
Washington, 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

I will try to secure for you some detailed information concerning American citizens who were dependent upon private agencies for funds in order to return to their homeland. I have no detailed information on hand at the moment. I hope there will be some in Boston but you remember that our statement to you was based upon Dr. Dexter's first-hand testimony. Among other instances he mentioned a request coming from Ambassador Hayes in Madrid for some American who was stranded there and who needed help which the American Embassy was unable to provide.

Sincerely yours,

*Charles R. Joy*

Charles R. Joy

orj:ea

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May 25, 1944

Dear Dr. Joy:

I have Miss Aninger's letter with respect to Mr. Wittmann and his associates.

I suggest that we meet at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, 42 West 44th Street, at about 3 p.m. on May 30. I trust that you will be there.

In connection with the suggestion you made some time ago with respect to Government or Red Cross funds being made available for American citizens who escape from enemy territory to neutral countries, I would appreciate it very much if you could let me have the details of a few instances when no such funds were forthcoming and the Unitarian Service Committee, or any similar private organization, found it necessary to come forward.

Very truly yours,

*L. Lawrence S. Lesser*

Lawrence S. Lesser  
Assistant Executive Director

Dr. Charles R. Joy, Executive Director  
Committee on Special Refugee Problems  
144 Bleecker Street  
New York 12, N. Y.

LSLesser:als 5/25/44

SPECIAL DELIVERY

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COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL REFUGEE PROBLEMS  
144 Bleecker Street, New York 12, N. Y.

ALgonquin 4 0722

May 22, 1944

Mr. Laurence F. Lesser  
War Refugee Board  
Treasury Department  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lesser:

Mr. Wittmann informs me that he, Dr. Bator, Mr. Mitnitski and two or three other gentlemen will be happy to meet with you at any time at your convenience on May 30th.

I suggest that you indicate a time and place that will suit you.

Sincerely yours,

*Eva Aninger*

Secretary to Dr. Joy

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April 25, 1944

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Pehle

From: L.S. Lesser

It has been reported to us that from time to time citizens of the United States who have been living in enemy-controlled Europe reach neutral countries, notably Spain and Portugal. These persons often lack sufficient funds for passage to this country and intermediate support, and frequently become objects of charity. This is so since, unlike most countries, the United States apparently has not made official funds available for the care and transportation of its citizens who find themselves in this predicament. Although private agencies abroad have on many occasions stepped into the breach, there appears to be an understandable feeling on their part that it is unfair to expect them to perform for American nationals what is generally considered to be a purely governmental function.

It has been suggested that the United States, acting through the State Department, should make funds available, either as gifts or as loans, to such stranded American victims of the war. An alternative suggestion has been made that loans from American Red Cross funds be arranged through United States Consulates. It will be recalled that the Red Cross advanced money to several hundred persons in a like situation, repatriated from Lisbon in 1942.

Our interest, of course, lies in the fact that the more American relief agencies abroad must spend for the care of stranded American citizens, the less they have available for the rescue and relief of persecuted persons who are in danger of death.

*Original left  
Mark Barks  
5-3-44*

RLSmith:LSLesser:lab:db 4/25/44

*L.S.L.*

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US 44-1116-111  
✓

April 25, 1944

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Pehle  
From: L.S. Lesser

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Original left  
with Bureau  
5-3-44

RLSmith:LSLesser:lab:db 4/25/44

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War Problems

May 5, 1944

A-B - Mr. Berle:

Reference is made to the underlying memorandum from Mr. Lesser of the War Refugee Board to Mr. Pehle, dated April 25, 1944, on the subject of financial assistance to United States citizens who escape from enemy-controlled territories in Europe to neutral European countries.

It is Mr. Lesser's suggestion that public funds or Red Cross funds be used for this purpose so as to remove this burden from the funds of private relief agencies in order that the latter may devote their funds wholly to needy alien refugees.

The American Red Cross prefers, I understand, not to use its funds for this purpose. Official funds are available to the Department for the purpose, and they have been and are being used in various parts of the world in aiding bona fide American nationals. Financial assistance loans to destitute United States nationals in Switzerland are authorized at the present time to a total of about \$550 monthly. Loans to needy United States nationals in Free China who are awaiting repatriation have been authorized. Loans to destitute United States nationals in Macau have been authorized and are being paid at the rate of approximately \$6,800 monthly. Financial assistance loans to needy United States nationals in Algeria, Tunisia, Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia and liberated areas in Italy have been authorized. The authorization of financial assistance payments to destitute United States nationals in the Irish Free State is under consideration. Repatriation loans have also been made to a large number of United States nationals from enemy-held territories in Europe in connection with exchange operations conducted at Lisbon, Portugal. Similar arrangements have been consummated in connection with the American-Japanese exchange operations.

In accordance with customary practice in such instances, the Department is prepared to consider on their merits the individual cases of needy or destitute bona fide United States nationals who have escaped from enemy-controlled areas which are presented by United States diplomatic and consular representatives in Spain, Portugal, or elsewhere. There are of course, cases of persons claiming American nationality who

upon

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upon investigation are found not to be entitled to financial assistance from public funds of the United States.

If Mr. Lesser has any specific individual cases in mind appropriate investigations will be made.

J. H. K.

SWP:JHChapman:JED:FAH

PD

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