

KILDAY, Paul J. (Hon.)

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AUG 23 1944

My dear Mr. Kilday:

I have your letter of August 11, 1944, requesting information on behalf of Mr. Edgar Russell, San Antonio, Texas, concerning the provisions of the law under which refugees are being brought into this country to be maintained in camps, the disposition that will be made of these refugees at the end of the war, whether they are being transported in American boats, and from what fund the expense of transportation and housing is paid.

With respect to the authority under which these refugees are being brought here, I am advised that the Attorney General recently replied to an inquiry along similar lines as follows:

".....The propriety of temporarily detaining aliens in this country outside of the requirements of the immigration laws has been recognized for many years. One of the earliest instances of this practice occurred in the Russo-Japanese war when the crews of Russian war vessels were interned in the United States outside of the regular procedure under the immigration statutes. A recent illustration of the practice is afforded by the case of the German, Italian and Japanese nationals who have been deported by Latin American countries to the United States under an arrangement whereby they are interned in this country and will ultimately be repatriated to their own countries. Similarly, prisoners of war brought here for custody do not enter under the immigration laws and they obtain no right to remain here or to be at liberty within the country. For obvious reasons, this is a practice that can be followed only in exceptional circumstances.

".....the President's message to Congress, dated June 12, 1944,indicates that the present proposal relates to a particular group of persons who are now a burden on our military forces in an active theater of war operations and that military necessity requires some temporary disposition of them. It may be pointed out that as an emergency measure these persons might be permitted to enter the United States under the immigration laws by waivers of documents by the Secretary of State and, if necessary, by waiver of ground of inadmissibility by the Attorney General. It was believed more desirable, however, not to

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apply the immigration laws, which create various rights and privileges, but to deal with this group as we have with the prisoners of war and other Axis nationals who are admitted to this country temporarily and detained here, outside, but not in violation of, the immigration laws."

As indicated in the President's message of June 12 to Congress, the refugees have been placed in the Emergency Refugee Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, under appropriate security restrictions. It is planned that they will be returned to their homelands upon the termination of the war.

In answer to your third question, the 984 refugees who were brought to the Shelter at Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York, came on a returning United States Army transport.

With respect to your question concerning the fund from which the expenses of transportation and housing are paid, the President, in a memorandum dated June 8, to the heads of the agencies concerned with the execution of the project, gave instructions that the Bureau of the Budget shall make arrangements for financing the project, using to the extent possible any funds of the War Department, the War Relocation Authority, and the War Refugee Board, and from the Foreign War Relief appropriation, and if necessary, drawing upon the President's Emergency Fund.

For your complete information, copies of the following documents are enclosed:

1. The President's Message to Congress, dated June 12
2. The text of a cablegram dated June 9, from the President to Ambassador Murphy in Algiers, and the memorandum of June 8, above referred to.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Honorable Paul J. Kilday,
House of Representatives.

*original signed
by Mr Pehle*

Enclosures.

EBT

RBH
RBHutchinson:agr 8-18-44

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PAUL J. KILDAY
20TH DISTRICT OF TEXAS
SAN ANTONIO

MISS IRENE WILLIAMS
SECRETARY

MISS GLORIA VALDES
LEO H. KING
ASSISTANTS

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

COMMITTEE ON
MILITARY AFFAIRS

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL GUARD
AND ORGANIZED RESERVES

MEMBER:
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION

August 11, 1944

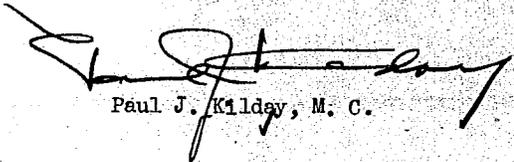
Mr. John W. Pehle
Executive Director
War Refugee Board
Treasury Building
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Pehle:

I am in receipt of a request from Mr. Edgar Russell of San Antonio, Texas, for information as to the provisions of law under which refugees are being brought into this country to be maintained in camps; what disposition will be made of them at the end of the war; whether they are being transported in American boats, and from what fund the expense of transportation and housing is paid.

It will be appreciated if you will furnish me this information, so that I may be in position to reply to Mr. Russell.

Sincerely yours,


Paul J. Kilday, M. C.

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