

LOWRIE, DONALD (Dr.)

000747

March 18, 1944

M E M O R A N D U M

*File*

FROM: Robert C. Dexter

TO: Mr. Friedman

Re: Dr. Donald Lowrie, Geneva, Switzerland

Dr. Donald Lowrie is the American representative on the international staff of the YMCA at Geneva. Few men now in Europe and none in Switzerland have as wide or as extensive contacts, both with refugees and particularly with underground organizations as has Dr. Lowrie. He has spent the last thirty years consecutively in Europe, serving in Russia, Czechoslovakia and France, to my knowledge, and possibly other countries. He speaks Czech, French and Russian, as well as some German and is in the closest possible touch with the Czech governmental officials in exile. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that Lowrie has more of the confidence of the Czechs than any other American. He also has very extensive contacts in France which he still manages to keep up one way or another. He was instrumental in getting thousands of refugees out of France before the occupation and has the closest possible relations with the Jewish organizations in France as well as the Christian organizations. I have worked with Lowrie a great deal in the last five years and I know no man who is more skillful in keeping his left hand from knowing what his right hand does than he. Despite the fact that he worked hard and continuously for refugees - not always a popular subject with our foreign representatives abroad - he had and still has the complete confidence of our Foreign Service staff.

Being situated in Geneva and connected with the International Y, he has contacts which still exist to some degree all over Europe. He is tremendously interested in the whole refugee problem and I personally believe should be brought into the picture of the War Refugee Board at the earliest possible moment and be given some kind of a position commensurate with his knowledge and ability. I do not refer to a paid position necessarily but I believe that the Y and I am sure Donald Lowrie would be only too happy to place his knowledge and experience at the disposal of the Board. It might be possible to regulate the situation vis-a-vis McClelland by appointing Lowrie regional representative of the Board for France and Switzerland. If it is decided to use Lowrie it would be best to consult him rather than the YMCA officials in this country. If it becomes desirable to do the latter, Paul Anderson of the International Y in New York is the man to see.

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