Requests for Specific Aid: Gifford, E. (Dr.)
Dear Mrs. Gifford:

I have your letter of December 4, 1944, concerning your daughter, Miss Evalien M. Wechselmann, who is interned in a concentration camp at Theresienstadt.

I am indeed sorry that there is no specific action which the Board can take to obtain the release of your daughter from the camp referred to, beyond our general programs which are directed to the rescue and protection of the victims of enemy persecution.

I can assure you that we are doing and will continue to do everything in our power in the interest of these people, and we earnestly hope that your daughter may benefit from the general activities which we are pursuing.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mrs. E. Gifford
Thames Hospital
Baillie Street
Thames, New Zealand
4th of Dec. 1944

Executive Office of the President,
Washington, D.C.

I am writing to you about one year ago, when my daughter, aged 17 years, was put into a Concentration Camp in Holland. I had not heard from her since then. Last Monday I received a letter from a girl in Palestine, who tells me that she is a friend of my daughter and had been together with her in the Camp Westerbork, Hooghalen, in Holland. She says that my daughter was on the 15th of January 1944 transferred to a Camp in Theresienstadt, and just a few days ago the girl saw my daughter's name on a list in Palestine. The girl herself did get to Palestine through an "Ausgabentransport" as she says, two months ago. She is a Jewish girl like my daughter. I wonder, if you could do something to help my daughter to get out of the Concentration Camp. I would be ever so thankful to you, you see, we here in New Zealand are so far away from everything and don't seem to be able to do anything. My husband and I have tried for 5 years, there must be ways to get my daughter out, somebody did help her friend to get out. If you are not able to do anything at all, would you be so kind and give this letter to some Jewish Society who might be able to help? Whatever the costs are. My husband is a Surgeon here at the Thames Hospital and you could inquire about him. My husband's name is Dr. Edward Gilford, Superintendent of Surgeon Thames Hospital.

Particulars about my daughter: (from my first marriage)
Dvellen Margot Neeshelmann, born 7th of April 1927
in Rotterdam, Holland.
Nationality: German, but through adoption of my second husband, New Zealand Nationality.
She lived till July 1943 with my sister, Mrs. Ficard-Bauman, Nicolaa Maesstr. 85, Amsterdam, Holland, then in Concentration camp Westerbork, Hooghalen, Holland till Jan. 1944. Since then she is supposed to be in Theresienstadt, but I don't know where that is. There is a Theresienstadt in Bohemia, I suppose it is the same place.

I would be very grateful if you could give me your assistance to help my daughter.
Yours faithfully,

[Mrs. E. Gilford]

Mrs. E. Gilford,
Auckland Capital, Maille Street,
Thames, New Zealand.
OPENED BY EXAMINER
D.D.A./124

If anything is enclosed this card will be sent by ordinary mail.

Executive Office of the President,
War Refugee Board,
Washington 25, D.C.

When folded the letter card must conform in size and shape with the blue border within which the address only may be written.
In reply please refer to 2899

AUG 12 1944

Dear Mrs. Gifford:

I have your recent letter, and its enclosure, concerning the plight of your daughter who is now in a concentration camp for political prisoners in Holland.

As stated in our previous letter to you, the Board cannot undertake problems limited to seeking out and rescuing specific individuals. In view of the magnitude of the task before it, the only practicable and remotely promising approaches are those devoted to groups of persons rather than to individuals.

We assure you, however, that the Board will continue its efforts, and we sincerely hope that among those spared will be your daughter.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. W. Fehle

J. W. Fehle
Executive Director

Mrs. Hella Gifford,
Thames Hospital Board,
Baillie Street,
Thames, New Zealand.
THAMES HOSPITAL BOARD

Executive Office of the President,
Refugee Board,
Washington, D.C.

24th of May 1944

Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 6th of May. I understand that you are only giving your help to people who are in real need. I am afraid that is also the case with my daughter, Evelyn Margot Michaelmann, by adoption now Evelyn Margot Gifford. I received about six weeks ago a message from the International Red Cross that my daughter, aged 16 years, is taken away from my sister, where she was staying with her, and put into a Concentration camp for political prisoners. I am enclosing the letter from the Red Cross. I don't know the reason for her imprisonment, but I suppose because she is her mother and married to a British subject.

You will, I am sure, understand if you could do something to get her child out of this Concentration camp. I would be very thankful to you.

Yours very sincerely

Hetta Gifford

My daughter's address: Mrs. Michaelmann, Gifford by adoption, later Mrs. Condor, Cost, Drente, Holland.
27th April, 1944.

Mrs. H. Gifford,
Thames Hospital Board,
Baillie Street,
THAMES.

Dear Madam,

Further to our letter of the 3rd instant we have to advise that very little data is available in New Zealand regarding Lager Westerbork in Holland. The International Red Cross Delegate has, however, advised that it is apparently not a recognised Internment Camp but is used by the Germans exclusively as a concentration camp for political prisoners.

The International Delegate has written to Geneva for further information regarding Camp Westerbork and will communicate with us again on receipt of a reply. When this is received we will write you again.

Assuring you of our interest and attention at all times.

Yours faithfully,

(SECRETARY, PRISONERS OF WAR SECTION, WAR PURPOSES COMMITTEE.)
Executive Office of the President,
War Refugee Board,
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Miss Isabel
Room 190
Dear Dr. Gifford:

I have your letter of February 19, 1944, concerning the possibility of rescuing your adopted daughter from Holland.

Your concern for the safety of Miss Wechselman meets with the fullest sympathy of the Board. I think you will understand, however, that the task of the Board is so great that, of necessity, it cannot deal with problems limited to seeking out and rescuing specific individuals. I assure you we are doing everything in our power to rescue and save the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death.

Persons in the United States seeking assistance for the rescue of specific individuals are being referred to private organizations. It is suggested that you may wish to refer your problem to the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, 146 Darlinghurst Road, Sydney, Australia.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Fehle
Executive Director

Dr. R. Gifford
Thames Hospital,
Nellie Street,
Thames, NEW ZEALAND.
Dear Sir,

I learn recently of the establishment of your Board and hope that you could help my wife and myself to get Miss Evelyn Jeckelman, away from Holland where she is staying with Mr. Michels of Kruidberperweg 2, Santpoort. Miss Jeckelman is 15 years of age and is my wife's daughter and my adopted daughter. I am a New Zealander and my wife came out to me here before the war between Germany and Holland broke out. We want Miss Jeckelman to come out to us here as soon as possible and we are very concerned in case she is suffering from some form of persecution in the mean time. She has some relatives in Oregon - Anna Weinberg, 1544 E Montgomery Street, Portland.

If you find it possible to help we will be extremely grateful.

Yours Faithfully,

[Signature]

(Or) Eswood.
The Chairman,  
Refugee Board,  
State Department,  
Washington,  
U.S.A.

WRB