

Requests for Specific Aid: MERCI, LUBA (M.S.)

000939

MAY 12 1945

Dear Mrs. Merel:

With further reference to your letter of April 20, 1945, the Department of State has advised us that your father's visa application was approved by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee on October 30, 1942, but that further action on the case was suspended in November 1942, since Mr. Epstein was residing in territory where no American consular visa services were available.

As pointed out in my letter of April 24, the principal aim of the Board's special visa program was to afford close relatives of citizens or resident aliens of the United States likely to be victims of enemy persecution such protection as might be afforded by the knowledge of German authorities that American consuls were authorized to issue United States immigration visas to them and that they were eligible for exchange. The capitulation of the German armies and the resultant disappearance of enemy control in European areas have removed the need for the protection which this program sought to obtain for detainees in the hands of the Germans. In the absence of any question of rescue or protection, these cases may now be handled under the regular immigration procedure.

While I am not informed as to what immigration facilities are available under present practical and technical difficulties, it is my understanding that a number of private organizations are in a position to provide assistance and information with respect to problems of this nature. Accordingly, I suggest that, when you have received a reply to your inquiry as to your father's present whereabouts, you may wish to ask one of the agencies named in the enclosed list to help you to arrange for his immigration to this country.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Florence Hodel

Florence Hodel
Acting Executive Director

Mrs. Luba Merel,
51-04 Skillman Avenue,
Woodside, Long Island,
New York.

Enclosure.

ERT:inn 5/10/45

000940

ADDRESS OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

In reply refer to
VD 811.111 Epsteinas, Mause

May 1, 1945

My dear Mr. O'Dwyer:

I refer to your letter of April 24, 1945 in which you request information concerning the visa case of Mr. Mause Epsteinas.

The records of the Department indicate that this case was approved by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee on October 30, 1942, but that action was suspended in November 1942 as Mr. Epsteinas was residing in territory where no American consular visa services were available.

Sincerely yours,

Eliot B. Coulter
Eliot B. Coulter
Acting Chief, Visa Division

Mr. William O'Dwyer,

Executive Director,

War Refugee Board,

Executive Office of the President.



000941

APR 24 1945

Dear Mrs. Merel:

Since receipt of your letter of April 20, 1945, we have requested the Department of State to inform us whether the visa application filed on behalf of your father was approved. If approval was given to the issuance of such a visa, the pertinent information will be communicated by the Board to the United States Legation in Switzerland for transmission to the German authorities.

The selection of individuals to be included in an exchange group or otherwise released from detention is determined solely by German authorities, and there is no action which the Board can take to secure the release of any specific person. The principal aim of the special visa program developed by the Board in collaboration with the Department of State is to afford close relatives of citizens or resident aliens of the United States likely to be victims of enemy persecution such protection as may result from the knowledge of the German authorities that American Consuls are authorized to issue United States immigration visas to them and that they are eligible for exchange. In addition to the special visa project, the Board is actively engaged in a program of broad measures for the rescue and relief of civilian detainees in the hands of the Germans. Please be assured that this Government is doing and will continue to do everything in its power to save as many of these people as possible.

With respect to your desire to ascertain your father's present whereabouts, I suggest that you ask your local Red Cross chapter to send an inquiry to the International Red Cross for information which they may have or may be able to obtain concerning him.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mrs. Luba Merel
51-04 Skillman Avenue
Woodside, Long Island
New York

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000942

APR 24 1945

Dear Mr. Travers:

The War Refugee Board has been advised that on or after October 30, 1942, the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee may have approved a visa application on behalf of Mr. Mause Epsteinas, a citizen of Lithuania born at Trauks, Lithuania, on February 22, 1872, and last known to have resided at 1 Rue des Alpes, La mure, Isere, France, from where he was deported by the Nazis in December 1943.

Your early advice as to whether the visa application under reference was approved will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) William O'Dwyer

William O'Dwyer
Executive Director

Mr. Howard K. Travers
Chief, Visa Division
Department of State
Washington 25, D. C.

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000943

Mrs. Luba Merel
61-04 Skillman Avenue
Woodside, L.I., N.Y.

April 20th, 1945

Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer
War Refugee Board
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I shall be immeasurably grateful if you will kindly help me in the case of my father,

Mr. Mause Epstein, a citizen of Lithuania, born at Trauks, Lithuania, on February 22, 1872, last known to have resided at 1 Rue des Alpes, La muere, Isere, France, deported by the Nazis in December, 1943.

I understand that persons whose visa application was favorably decided upon by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee on or after July 1, 1941, are eligible for an exchange from Germany to this country.

I attended a hearing before said Committee, on my father's behalf, on October 30, 1942 (Docket No. 9410); but due to the subsequent severance of the diplomatic relations with France I was advised by Visa Form A-2, dated November 11, 1942, that no further steps could be taken at the time.

Since there is the possibility that the Committee had already rendered a favorable opinion concerning my father's visa case, I shall be greatly obliged if you will kindly check into this matter with a view to my father's inclusion into some exchange arrangement as well as with a view to the preliminary steps which could be taken in order to ascertain his present abode.

As regards myself, I wish to state that I was naturalized as an American citizen in the Federal Court of the Eastern District of New York at Brooklyn, N.Y., on January 9, 1945.

By letter dated March 24, 1945, I submitted the foregoing facts to the Special War Problems Division of the State Department, but did not receive any reply as yet.

Thanking you very much for any assistance, I am

Most respectfully yours,

Luba Merel
LUBA MEREL

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