

Cooperation with Other Governments: United Nations: Canada

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Cooperation with Other Governments: United Nations: Canada

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FFC-76
(11-42)

~~CROSS REFERENCE~~ COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS:
UNITED NATIONS (CANADA)

FOR:

Amendment to this License
Extension of this License
Renewal of this License
Correspondence concerning this application .
Other (Specify)

FOR MATERIAL RE CANADA HAVINGS EXPRESSED TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL
COMMITTEE ITS WILLINGNESS WO ACCEPT A GROUP OF CHILD REFUGEES

SEE: PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO
SWITZERLAND

(EVACUATION OF ABANDONED CHILDREN FROM FRANCE)

PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO
AND THROUGH SPAIN (AND PORTUGAL) *Box 37*
(EVACUATION OF CHILDREN FROM FRANCE TO SPAIN AND PORTUGAL (JDC))

000750

APR 10 1944

Sir:

The Secretary of State has referred to me a copy of your Dispatch No. 1490, of March 17, 1944, in reply to the Department of State's circular airgram of January 28, 1944, concerning the establishment of the War Refugee Board.

Your cooperation in making this information available is appreciated. The comments embodied in your dispatch are being carefully studied.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

North Winship, Esq.,
American Consul General,
Toronto, 1, Canada.

EST. PPH H.H. Hutchison:agr 4-8-44 JH

APR 10 1944

Dear Mr. Clark:

The Secretary of State has referred to me a copy of your Dispatch No. 886, of March 18, 1944, and its enclosures, in reply to the Department of State's circular airgram of January 26, 1944, concerning the establishment of the War Refugee Board.

The Board appreciates your cooperation in making this information available, and the comments and suggestions embodied in your dispatch, and its enclosures, are being carefully studied.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Lewis Clark,
First Secretary of Embassy,
United States Embassy,
Ottawa, Canada.

815A PHHutchinson:agr 4-8-44 JH

NOTES ON REFUGEE SITUATION IN CANADA

The following remarks are based on a series of visits to Canada over the past ten years. Most of these visits were social and the intelligence on the refugee situation was gathered quite incidentally. The principal sources of information are Mr. Benjamin Robinson, for many years president of JIAS (the uncle of the writer); his wife, who has been active in activities in behalf of refugees; Mr. Michael Garber, active in the Zionist movement in Canada; Mr. Saul Hayes, the leading professional in the field of refugee work; and refugees residing in Canada.

1. The Jewish population of Canada totals approximately 151,000. The total population of Canada is 11 million. The Jewish group is concentrated largely in Montreal and Toronto. Although the Jewish community is much less well-organized for refugee work and for fund-raising than is the United States community, their contributions have been impressive.

2. One peculiarly Canadian factor is the importance of the French-Canadian attitude in influencing Dominion policy. In the Province of Quebec, for example, 60% of the population is French-Canadian and Catholic. Their views on refugees and Jews are quite hostile. One result is that the Dominion Government moves carefully in handling the refugee problem.

3. The existing Canadian immigration laws apparently permit considerable discretion to the administrative officials. In general, preference in entry has been granted to refugees with money and to refugees who promise to make good farmers. Artificial efforts to broaden the definition of "farmers" have not been successful. There has been considerable immigration under these two provisions. Figures on the money brought to Canada by refugees are quite staggering. One New York newspaper carried an account that estimated the total at many millions. The success of the farmers is not clear.

4. The most dramatic and heart-breaking experience that Canada has had with refugees occurred in 1940 when the United Kingdom Government sent over to Canada 4,000 male "enemy aliens" who had been interned in Britain shortly after Dunkirk. Included were German and Austrian boys attending Oxford and Cambridge who were apprehended in the panic that seized Britain in the darkest days of the war. A great deal of acrimony arose as to the status of these men. Britain was willing to have them released from Canadian camps for entry to the United States where the parents of many reside. Britain actually sent a representative over to try to persuade the Canadian Government

From Abrahamson file

to release them, but the Canadian Government took a stubborn negative attitude, with the result that it continued to regard the boys as prisoners and at first refused to release them at all. Private American agencies entered the picture by trying to have a release effected so that the boys could enter this country. Various patriotic organizations in this country objected to our accepting "prisoners". The British representative spent many months in Canada trying to straighten the matter out, but his mission proved to be a failure. After many representations to the proper Dominion authorities, it was decided to release some boys to continue their education providing Canadians were willing to furnish them room and board and pay for their education and guarantee their good-conduct. I met a number of boys who were living with relatives of mine while they were studying at McGill University at Montreal. They are an impressive lot. Some other boys received training at camp by Canadian ORT and were gradually released for employment in essential industry.

Latest reports indicate that all but 900 of these men have left Canada, and that the 900 remaining have been "unconditionally released". Many of these have relatives in the United States, and the Canadian Government now wonders whether the United States would be interested in receiving them as immigrants. This problem is hardly one of direct concern to the War Refugee Board, but I am unofficially calling it to the attention of one of the private agencies.

5. In the fall of 1942 when the United States offered to accept 5,000 children from France, Canada agreed to take 1,000. Mr. Hayes actually visited the Jewish communities all over Canada in an effort to find homes for the children. There is no doubt that funds would have been available to care for these children. Prime Minister King has recently renewed this offer and we are suggesting that, as is being done by the United States, Canadian visas be granted now to enable the children to enter Switzerland for the duration.

6. The latest-known group of immigrants to Canada consists of 300, due in Philadelphia from Lisbon on the 6th of April. Half of these are destined for Toronto and half for Montreal. In view of Canada's willingness to reopen immigration activity in Lisbon, there is some ground for optimism that entrance of other groups would be encouraged.

7. The administration of Canada's immigration policy has been quite uneven. A new administrator has recently been appointed and it is hard to tell just what his attitude is going to be. Aside from the

- 3 -

French-Canadian group, the population has in it elements that are quite sympathetic.

Note: These views are impressions and not intended as precise, documentary data.

A.A.

4/7/44

000761



CONTROL COPY

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Ottawa, April 7, 1944.

No. 928

Subject: Rescue and Relief of European Refugees.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular Airgrams of January 26, 1944, 7:00 p. m., and February 29, 1944, 7:30 p. m., and to the Embassy's Airgram No. A-9 dated March 11, 3:00 p. m., and its despatch No. 835 dated March 18, 1944, with regard to the rescue and relief of European refugees.

RECEIVED
REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON, D. C.

The Canadian Minister of Mines and Resources, T. A. Crerar, informed the House of Commons on March 30th that a party of 256 war refugees, which had escaped to Spain and Portugal, was on its way to Canada. During the discussion, the Prime Minister said he expected to make a full statement on the refugee situation later in the session.

According to the Ottawa Journal of April 7 the party of refugees referred to already has arrived in Philadelphia on its way to Canada.

Respectfully yours,

True copy of the
original signed by:

Ray Atherton.

Copy to Mr. Parsons, European Affairs.

710/711
JEH:mej

100715

AMERICAN AIR MAIL
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Ottawa, March 18, 1944.

No. 835.

Subject: Rescue and Relief of European Refugees.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular airgram dated January 26, 1944, 7 p.m., with regard to the President's Executive Order of January 22, 1944 establishing the War Refugee Board. Reference is also made to the Department's circular airgram dated February 29, 1944, 7:30 p.m., and to the Embassy's airgram No. A-9 dated March 11, 8:00 p.m.

1/
2/ Acting upon the Department's instructions, the Embassy sent a note, No. 96, dated February 11, 1944, to the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs outlining the position of the Government of the United States in connection with the furnishing of aid to the victims of Nazi aggression, and asking to be informed of the attitude of the Canadian Government. There has now been received from the Secretary of State for External Affairs a note, No. 28, dated March 11, 1944, copy of which is attached, drawing attention to a statement made by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on July 9, 1943, copy of which is enclosed, reviewing the steps the Canadian Government has taken up to now to assist refugees from European countries, and requesting that consideration be given by the Government of the United States to allowing the entry from Canada of certain refugees who were sent to this country from the United Kingdom in 1940 to be interned.

CC: Chauncey, Abrahamson, Aksin, Bernstein, Gohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pollak, Rains, Smith, Standish, Stewart, H. D. White, Pehle, Sargoy, Mannon, Weinstein, Files

I would be glad to be informed of the nature of the reply
you would make to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

/s/ Lewis Clark
Lewis Clark
First Secretary of Embassy.

Enclosure:

- 1/ From External Affairs,
March 11, 1944.
- 2/ Statement of Prime
Minister on July 9, 1943.

Copy to Mr. Parsons, European Affairs.
10/711
JER/ems

70076

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch
No. 835 of March 18, 1944 from
the Legation at Ottawa.

2015

DEPARTMENT OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
CANADA

Ottawa, March 11th, 1944.

No. 28

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your letter No. 27 of February 11th, in which you informed me of the proposal made by the President of the United States for the establishment of a Board of Refugees in Europe through the establishment of the War Relocation Board. It is noted that the Board will cooperate with the Intergovernmental Committee and with UNRCA in measures to be taken for refugee assistance.

In reply to your final paragraph concerning the attitude of the Canadian Government, may I refer you to the statement made by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on July 9th of last year? In that statement the Prime Minister outlined the measures which were being taken by the Canadian Government to help relieve refugees from Nazi aggression. During the last ten years a good many refugees from political, religious and racial persecution have found asylum in Canada. Our records, like those of the United States, do not identify "refugees" as a separate class of entrant. Many of those admitted for permanent settlement during this period could probably be regarded as refugees, and this is probably true of a much higher proportion of persons granted "temporary admission" during the war years. In the statement already cited, the Prime Minister said that, while it was obviously impossible for the Government to give a general undertaking that all persons who had been granted temporary admission would be enabled to stay in Canada after the war, nevertheless individual applications for permission to remain would be given sympathetic consideration. A further measure intended to assist in meeting the refugee problem was

taken in October of last year when the Canadian Government reopened its Immigration Office in Lisbon in order to facilitate the issuance of visas to refugee families in Spain and Portugal who might wish to proceed to this country.

In addition to facilitating the admission to Canada of refugee families who are able to leave Europe, the Canadian Government has recently renewed its offer to accept up to 1,000 Jewish refugee children from France if they can be got out. The circumstances of our offer were essentially the same as those underlying a similar offer made by your Government to receive up to 5,000 children, with the exception of the fact that we have authorized their acceptance up to the age of eighteen, while for admission to the United States they must not be over sixteen.

A third group of refugees in which this country has been interested is made up of persons who were interned in the United Kingdom in the summer of 1940 at the time when the imminent danger of German invasion compelled the United Kingdom Government to intern all male enemy aliens, within certain age groups, who happened to be residing in certain prescribed areas in the United Kingdom. Over 4,000 of these were brought to Canada under a special arrangement with the United Kingdom Government. The records and credentials of all were examined with great care and the majority have long since been released. Of those released, some have returned to the United Kingdom and some have gone elsewhere, but over 900 remain in Canada. Since December 10th, 1943, these 900 have been at complete liberty in this country and are under no restrictions arising out of the fact that they are refugees or were at one time, as a purely precautionary measure, interned. They are, of course, subject to the general regulations which apply to all enemy aliens in this country. In the majority of cases the good faith and sympathies of the refugees are beyond any doubt and in those instances they are absolved even of the requirement of reporting to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, except at very rare intervals. As your Government is aware, from previous correspondence, a number of the refugees in this group have relatives or close friends in the United States and are anxious to proceed there. Now that their release in Canada has been made completely unconditional, it is hoped that your Government can see its way clear to contribute to their further assistance by allowing those who are otherwise eligible for entry into the United States to do so.

I shall be glad to hear from you of the progress of the War Refugee Board in dealing with the refugee problem.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

N. A. Robertson

For Secretary of State for
External Affairs.

The United States Ambassador to Canada,
United States Embassy,
Ottawa.

10076

Enclosure No. 2 to despatch
No. 825 of March 18, 1944, from
the Embassy at Ottawa.

Statement of Prime Minister in House
of Commons on July 9, 1943.

I shall now make a statement on the policy of the government with respect to refugees from Europe. Only the most callous could contemplate with indifference the situation of most of those unfortunates who, since Hitler's assumption of power, have been driven from their homes. Among them are to be found members of nearly every nationality and creed under the sun. They have been scattered far and wide. Most of them, however, including those whose sufferings are greatest, are still contained within the ring of territories held by the axis armies. For them, except perhaps for a tiny number who may by subterfuge or stealth cross the axis-held frontiers to neighboring neutral countries, the only escape from persecution lies in the victory of the armies of the united nations.

Inside German dominated Europe terrible things are happening but the lash has fallen on the backs of the Jews more heavily than on any other group or race. Last December, the allied governments in London, in conjunction with the United Kingdom and the United States, issued a declaration denouncing the ruthless German policy of extermination of the Jewish people under their control and promising retribution. The government of Canada was glad immediately to associate itself with this declaration. There is, unfortunately, abundant evidence that there has been no change during the last six months. Indeed, in eastern Europe especially, the signs are that the treatment of the Jews has grown even more pitiless, and Jews from the western European territories under German control have been moved eastwards to share the fate of those from central and eastern Europe.

There is nothing that the allied governments can do to save these hapless people except to win the war as quickly and as completely as possible. They cannot be removed from axis territory. Efforts to aid them, even if aid was feasible, would prolong their agony if these efforts were to prolong the war. It was agreed, at the recent Bermuda conference between

officials of the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, that no negotiations could be undertaken with Hitler, since his entire record has left no doubt that he would only agree to such solutions as would be of direct aid to the axis war aims. It was also agreed that nothing could be recommended that would interfere or delay the war effort of the united nations.

This Bermuda conference, however, has made a number of recommendations for the purpose of assisting those refugees who have already managed to penetrate through the axis ring to neutral countries. While victory alone can reach the central core of the refugee problem, it is not by any means beyond the power of the united nations to aid those who have escaped but have not yet found a safe asylum until peace is restored. I cannot give the house details either of the number of refugees in various neutral and allied territories or of the proposals now accepted by the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom - which were recommended by the Bermuda conference. The delegations agreed that the details of their deliberations must be regarded as confidential so long as a knowledge of their recommendations would be of aid or comfort to our enemies or might adversely affect the refugees whom all are trying to aid. The universal problem of shipping was also recognized at the conference as of the utmost urgency and it was agreed there that any plan that looked to the diverting of allied shipping from the war effort, to remove or care for refugees, would present considerations of a military character which would disclose almost insuperable difficulties.

NO. 1490

CONTROL COPY

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Toronto, 1, Canada, March 17, 1944.

Canada
War Refugee
(Trer.)

SUBJECT: War Refugee Board.

Abrahamson

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular airgram dated January 26, 1944, to the Embassy at Ottawa, concerning the establishment of a War Refugee Board for the relief of the Jews in Europe and other victims of enemy persecution, and to state that inasmuch as immigration policies and controls are under the Dominion Central Government, the Consulate General is in a position to report only on certain local aspects of the matter.

The Jewish Immigrant Aid Society is the only large society represented at Toronto generally interested in assisting Jews who desire to migrate to Canada. The head office of this organization in Canada is at Montreal. While no specific cases of discrimination against Jews in the matter of immigration have been brought to the attention of the Consulate General, the local representative of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society, with whom this office has had a lengthy conference, left the impression that, in his opinion, Canadian restrictive immigration policy was more rigidly enforced in the cases of persons of Jewish extraction than in the case of any other known race that can be admitted into this Dominion. He also intimated that his head office at Montreal could supply case histories of Jews refused admission into the Dominion for purely technical reasons or without a reasonable explanation of the reason for the refusals. In support of his contention, this representative of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society provided the Consulate General with the following excerpt from Professor Watson Thomson's "I Accuse", which, he states, sums up in a nut shell how small a Jewish refugee's chances are of receiving a "permit":

Excerpt from Professor Watson Thomson's "I Accuse".

"What Canada Actually Does

Few citizens of Canada have any clear idea of Canada's immigration policy as expressed by the Dominion legislation on the subject and the regulations and practices of the Immigration Branch (a branch, for some obscure reason, of the Department of Mines and Resources). Our first task in this chapter is to

examine

149.40 REFUGEE/S/5492

PS/MC

examine some of these official barriers which have to be crossed before any immigrants or refugees can enter Canada. We need to study this to learn how hard is the way of the refugee.

In the first place, be it noted that, since World War 1, the declared purpose of Canada's immigration legislation has been not to admit immigrants (with specified exceptions) but to exclude (with specified exceptions). Following closely the trends of American policy, this 'keep out' attitude also reflects the mood of nationalistic restriction and fear which pervaded the whole Western world increasingly in the period between the two great wars."

"Canada's Racial Principles

Secondly, Canada's immigration policy is admittedly based upon 'racial principles' - exactly those racial principles expressed most elaborately and emphatically in Nazism! The 1941 Report of the Immigration Branch admits: 'Canada, in accordance with a generally accepted practice, places greater emphasis upon race and upon citizenship.' The Administrative Regulations of the Immigration Branch refer to three groups of non-British European immigrants. The first is the 'Preferred Group' which includes citizens of Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. This is obviously the good 'Nordic Group', though Finns seem to have crept in by mistake. They have the same freedom from immigration restrictions as British subjects, except that they do not benefit from special arrangements with the transportation companies by which passenger fares are reduced.

The second 'Non-preferred Group' includes citizens of Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Rumania, Lithuania, Latvia and Esthonia. Of that group only farmers, farm-laborers, domestic servants and the immediate relatives of persons already resident in Canada may be admitted.

The third group has no name but points a finger of special disapproval at all immigrants from Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Armenia, Syria and Turkey and all Jews, no matter what their citizenship, except those born within the British Empire. These may not be admitted at all, except by special permit (which may or may not be granted) for each individual case by the Immigration Branch. The examination of this clause above gives striking insight into the weird mysteries of the official mind. One of our Axis enemies, you will note belongs to the 'Preferred Group'; the other, generally considered the less dangerous, is in the least welcome category! Then, again one of the United Nations which put up the most gallant resistance to the armed might of the Axis - namely Greece - is included in the third, most despised class along with Italians, Bulgarians and Jews! Interesting also that Germans from Germany are 'preferred' and Germans from Austria are 'non-preferred'.

Discrimination

Discrimination against Jews is there openly in these same regulations. From the non-preferred countries such as Poland and Lithuania a distinction is made between Jewish and non-Jewish applicants. Jewish applicants automatically drop out of the non-preferred category into the 'special permit' groups.

Another interesting clause (added in 1910 in P.C. 920, renewed in 1914 as P.C. 23) prohibits the entry into Canada of immigrants who do not come to Canada by 'continuous unbroken journey from their country of birth or citizenship'. You may wonder why a man should become undesirable for admission to Canada just because he stopped off to visit his brother for a month at some intermediate point on the way. You may well wonder!

The origin of that regulation is of great interest in a study of the bureaucratic mind. The Dominion Government of that day wanted to discourage the influx of natives of British India into the province of British Columbia, without putting on the statute books a law openly prohibiting the entry of citizens of another part of the British Empire. There was no direct steamship line from India to Canada so that the 'unbroken journey' requirement became a clever (or was it hypocritical?) means of excluding Hindus without actually declaring that intention. The regulation still stands and is now one of the effective barriers of the entry of thousands of refugees. How many refugees can come from their country of birth or citizenship to Canada in one unbroken journey? Most of them have lived lives of exceedingly broken journeys, sometimes for several years now.

The only possible evaluation of Canada's immigration regulations is to say that they are a mass of contradictions and evasiveness, reactionary in theory and inhuman in practice. They are understandable in light of the ignorances and fears of the past. They are utterly inappropriate to the emergencies of the present and utterly at variance with the best interests of Canada's future. The best thing about the Act is also one of its most dangerously undemocratic features. There are clauses which give the officials of the Immigration Branch the right through Order in Council to dispense with any inconvenient 'letter of the law'. Section 82 provides that 'The Governor-in-Council may, on the recommendation of the Minister, make such orders and regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, as are considered necessary or expedient for enforcing the provisions of this Act, according to the true intent and meaning thereof'. And Section 4 reads as follows: 'The Minister may issue a written permit authorizing any person to enter Canada or having entered or landed in Canada to remain therein without being subject to the provisions of this Act.'

The Consulate General has requested the representative of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Society here to keep it currently

informed

informed of developments in regard to Jewish immigration in order that this office may be in a position to render that organization all possible assistance.

Respectfully yours,

North Winship
American Consul General

File 800/811.11
RWH:CTE:SB.

To the Department in single copy.
Copy to the Embassy.

CONTROL COPY

*2 - War Refugee Bd
(Mr. Pehle)*

LC

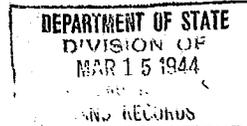
AIRGRAM

Ottawa

Dated March 11, 1944

Rec'd 10 a.m., 14th

Secretary of State,
Washington.



A-9, March 11, 3:00 p.m.

Reference Department's Circular Airgram dated
February 29, 1944, 7:30 p.m.

Embassy is advised informally by Department of
External Affairs that a statement will be made in the
House of Commons on the entire refugee question,
probably within the next six weeks. It has not yet
been decided whether the statement will be made by the
Prime Minister or by the Minister of Mines and Res-
sources.

CLARK ✓

JEH:mmdj

MAR 15 1944

FEB 19 1944

Dear Mr. Tremblay:

Thank you for your letter of February 11, 1944, enclosing copies of Mr. Grerar's statement regarding the Canadian Government's policy on refugees.

I sincerely appreciate your interest and I look forward to further discussions on this matter.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J. W. Pehle

J. W. Pehle
Acting Executive Director

Mr. Paul Tremblay,
Third Secretary,
Canadian Embassy,
2480 16th Street, N.W.,
Washington, D. C.

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COPIES TO:
Secretary (Miss Chauncey)
Mr. Paul
Mr. White
Mr. Gaston
Mr. Pehle
Mr. Luxford
Mr. DuBois
Mr. E. M. Bernstein
Mr. Stewart
Mr. Lesser
Mr. Friedman
Miss Hodel
Mr. Pollak



Ottawa, February 11, 1944.

Dear Mr. Pehle,

With reference to our conversation the other day, I am enclosing herewith two copies of a statement made by the Minister of Mines and Resources, The Hon. T.A. Crerar, regarding the Government's policy on refugees, which you may find of some interest.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Trevelyan

John W. Pehle, Esq.,
Room 288 1/2,
Main Treasury Building,
Washington, D.C.

2/12/44

PRESS STATEMENT ON REFUGEES MADE BY THE MINISTER
OF MINES AND RESOURCES

The Prime Minister on July 9th made in the House of Commons a general statement of Government policy on refugees and reviewed the steps already taken and those contemplated by the Government as their contribution to the relief of these unhappy victims of Nazi persecution. I am now able to make public further actions taken by the Government in this connection.

One of the main conclusions reached at the meeting held last spring in Bermuda between representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States was that concerted international action was essential since the refugee problem could only be solved by co-operative effort. This meeting proposed that the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees should be re-organized so as to extend its powers and its membership. Detailed proposals were later submitted by the Executive Committee of the Intergovernmental Committee to 49 Governments and these proposals were at once accepted by the Government of Canada.

Their principal effect is -

- (1) to expand the membership of the Committee (hitherto limited mainly to countries of the American continents and western Europe) so as to include all countries other than the enemy powers;
- (2) to extend the activities of the Committee (previously restricted to refugees from Germany and Austria) so as to include as far as practicable all persons wherever they may be, who, as a result of events in Europe, have had or may have to leave their countries of residence because of the danger to their lives or liberties because of their race, or religion or political beliefs;
- (3) to empower the Committee to undertake negotiations with neutral or allied states and private organizations for the preservation, maintenance and transport of refugees and to receive and spend private and public funds for these purposes;
- (4) to invite in due course all member governments to contribute to the cost of the maintenance and transport of refugees (hitherto Member States have provided only administrative expenses and other costs have been met from private sources);
- (5) to arrange that the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration should, if possible assume responsibility for refugees in any areas in which it may be operating.

...It....

Very dear Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. in relation to the proposed movement of the Government of the United Kingdom to the United States of America and to the Government of the United States of America.

It is to be hoped that these proposals will be accepted by all the Governments concerned and that there will thus be established an effective method of securing continuous international cooperation and financial support for the maintenance and transportation of the refugees who are already outside enemy territory or may succeed in escaping to neutral or allied countries.

The Canadian Government has also undertaken to institute at once on its own behalf certain further measures for the relief of refugees. A substantial number of refugees who have not succeeded in finding a place of abode for the duration of the war are in Spain and Portugal and their placement is one of the urgent aspects of the problem. It has been decided to authorize a further movement of refugees from this area to Canada and to facilitate this movement the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources is re-opening its office in Lisbon. An Immigration official is now at Lisbon for this purpose and to issue the necessary visas.

Sympathetic consideration is also being given by the Canadian Government to persons of enemy nationality who having been interned in the United Kingdom were brought to Canada under special arrangements in 1940. Whilst some of these were dangerous the majority were found to be refugees from enemy persecution. Some have been allowed to return to the United Kingdom and most of those remaining have been temporarily released in Canada for employment. The need for thorough investigation to determine beyond doubt the political sympathies of those so released necessitated certain restrictions which, whilst not limiting their capacity to perform useful service in Canada, made close surveillance possible. These restrictions are now under review and may be relaxed in the near future.

November 2, 1943.

CONTROL COPY

American Embassy
Ottawa

3. War Refugee Bd. (Jus)

February 15, 1944.

Memorandum of Conversation

Subject: War Refugees.

Participants: Mr. R. A. G. Robertson, Department
of External Affairs;

Mr. Horner.

Copies to:

I called upon Mr. Robertson this morning and delivered the Embassy's Note No. 96 of February 11, 1944, concerning the establishment of a War Refugee Board. Mr. Robertson took over the handling of refugee only about 10 days ago.

Mr. Robertson said that in 1940 approximately 4,000 refugees were admitted to Canada from the United Kingdom, many of these being classified as dangerous. About 1,000 of these have since left Canada and about 2,000 are interned here, leaving only approximately 900 who are at liberty in Canada. Only a trickle of refugees reached this country in 1941 and 1942. Last October Canada sent an Immigration Agent to Lisbon with authority to admit an initial group of 200 families (this figure is not for publication). The Agent reports that there seemed to be but 600 or so refugees in the Iberian Peninsula who desire to leave and he thinks it doubtful whether Canada will be able to find as many as 200 families. External Affairs recently asked its representative in Algiers to ascertain the refugee situation there, but has not yet had a report. However,

it

it is Mr. Robertson's impression that most of the refugees in North Africa have been absorbed into the British Pioneer Corps, and that the refugee problem is not serious.

Mr. Robertson mentioned that the Canadian Government, on its own initiative, recently asked its High Commissioner in Ireland to obtain the views of the Irish Government with regard to refugees. Ireland, apparently, is the only neutral country which has made no effort to assist in taking refugees. I asked Mr. Robertson whether, in view of the reported shortage of food in Ireland, it might not be necessary, in the event Ireland agreed to take some refugees, that foodstuffs be shipped there from North America. He agreed that it probably would be necessary, but said that the Canadian High Commissioner in Dublin had not been instructed to make any offer. Incidentally, Mr. Robertson said that Canada very recently renewed its offer to the Inter-Governmental Committee to take 1,000 Jewish children from Europe.

External Affairs will reply to our note in the near future, but probably will not be able to add anything of importance to what Mr. Robertson has told me. Generally, it would appear that Canada is fully cooperating with regard to refugees.