

Cooperation with Other Governments: United Nations: China

000782

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Chungking, April 15, 1944.

No. 2454

Subject: Protection of Victims of Enemy
Oppression.

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

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Embassy's despatch no. 2345 of March 22, 1944 in regard to relief measures for victims of enemy oppression and to the Department's circular airgram of February 29, 1944, 7:30 p.m. on the same subject, and to report that I discussed this matter with the Foreign Minister on April 4, 1944. Dr. Soong stated that the question was, of course, more or less academic so far as China was concerned, but promised a statement of policy from his Government.

Under date of April 7, 1944 the Foreign Minister addressed a formal note to the Embassy (translation enclosed) stating that the intent of the War Refugee Board meets with the complete support of and evokes the respect of the Chinese Government; that the Jews and minority peoples of Europe who have been rendered homeless and wandered to China will be extended full protection by the Chinese Government; and that the Chinese Government is particularly gratified with President Roosevelt's mention of the rescue and relief of other victims of enemy persecution, which would include victims of Japanese oppression.

The Embassy feels that the record of the Chinese on this matter is good. Before the Japanese occupation there were many Jewish refugees who came to China and while for the most part they congregated in the foreign

settlements

cc: Mr. Abrahamson, Mr. Aikin, Mr. Bernstein, Miss Channoy (for the Sec'y)
Mrs. Cohn, Mr. DeBois, Mr. Friedman, Mr. Gaston, Miss Kodel,
Miss Laughlin, Mr. Lesser, Mr. Lufford, Mr. Mann, Mrs. Maunon,
Messrs. Marks, McCormack, Murphy, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Rains, Sargoy,
Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White.

settlements and were not directly under Chinese jurisdiction, they were not maltreated by the Chinese; nor does the Embassy recall any Chinese objection when the large shiploads of such refugees arrived at Shanghai from Germany via Italy and were landed in the International Settlement. It was the only part of the world to which they could go. While the Chinese might have objected to such wholesale landings in China, they did not do so; however, World Jewry made financial provision for these people and consequently they were not a charge on the Chinese.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ C. E. Gauss

C. E. Gauss

Enclosure:

1. Translation of note from Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated April 7, 1944.

In single copy to the Department.

380

HP/CSC/ky

Enclosure no. 1 to despatch no. 2436 of April 15, 1944
from the American Embassy, Chungking.

(Translation)

Normal note

From: Dr. T. V. Soong, Minister for Foreign Affairs
To: H. E. C. E. Gauss, American Ambassador, Chungking

Dated: April 7, 1944
Received: April 11, 1944

Translated: FJGL - April 12, 1944
Checked: FF - April 12, 1944

Excellency:

I have the honor to refer to Your Excellency's note of March 6, 1944 stating that it has been decided to create a War Refugee Board for the rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution and requesting that you be informed as to the attitude of the Chinese Government on this matter.

The intent of such an organization meets with the complete support and evokes the respect of the Chinese Government. The Jews who have been oppressed by Nazi Germany and the minority peoples of Europe who have been rendered homeless and have wandered to China will, of course, be extended full protection and relief by the Chinese Government.

The Chinese Government is particularly gratified to note that mention has also been made by the President of the United States in the Executive Order of the rescue and relief of other victims of enemy persecution, among whom the people oppressed by the Japanese in the Far East would of course be included.

I have the honor to incite this reply with the request that Your Excellency take note in the premises and that the contents thereof be transmitted to Your Excellency's Government.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Stamped) T. V. SOONG
(Sealed) MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CONTROL COPY

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Chungking, March 22, 1944.

No. 2345.

Subject: Protection of Victims of Enemy
Oppression.

The Ambassador has the honor to refer to the Department's circular airmgram of January 26, 7:00 p.m., in regard to relief measures for victims of enemy oppression, and to enclose a copy of the Embassy's circular instruction of February 28, 1944 addressed to American diplomatic and consular officers in China requesting reports on the matter for transmission to the Department.

There is also enclosed a copy of the Embassy's formal note of March 6, 1944 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has orally informed the Embassy that the matter has been referred to the Executive Yuan for consideration.

Despatches to the Department received from the officers stationed at Kunming, Sian and Chengtu in accordance with the Embassy's circular are transmitted herewith. Replies from other offices will be forwarded when they are received.

Enclosures:

1. Copy of circular instruction to American diplomatic and consular officers in China;
2. Copy of Embassy's note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
3. Despatch no. 50 of March 7, 1944 from the American Consulate General, Kunming;
4. Despatch no. 3 of March 9, 1944 from the Secretary on detail at Sian;
5. Despatch no. 10 of March 12, 1944 from the Secretary on detail at Chengtu.

Single copy to the Department.

320

HP/kky

100786

Enclosure no. 1 to despatch no. 2245 of March 22, 1944
from the American Embassy, Chungking.

Chungking, China, February 28, 1944

CIRCULAR NO. 30

Subject: Protection of Victims of Enemy Oppression.

To

American Diplomatic and Consular Officers in China.

Sirs:

There is enclosed a copy of an airgram dated January 26, 1944, 7:00 p.m. received by the Embassy from the Department in regard to relief of victims of enemy oppression. It is desired that each office render a report on its district as called for in the fourth paragraph of the airgram. These reports, addressed to the Department, should follow the form specified in the Embassy's circular no. 27 of February 7, 1944 and be transmitted through the Embassy.

Other action required in the airgram will be taken by the Embassy.

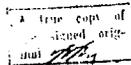
Very truly yours,

C. E. Gauss

Copies to:

Consulate General, Kunning.
Consulates, Kwoilin, Tihwa.
Secretaries of Embassy on detail
at Chengtu, Lanchow, Sian.

HP/ccw



000787

Enclosure no. 2 to despatch no. 2245 of March 22, 1944
from the American Embassy, Chungking.

Chungking, March 6, 1944

Excellency:

I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that I
have received an instruction from my Government reading,
in part, as follows:

"The President has instructed the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War to take action for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution. In an executive order issued January 22, the President declared: 'It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war'. The order establishes special governmental machinery for executing this policy. It creates a War Refugee Board consisting of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War. The Board is charged with direct responsibility to the President in seeing that the announced policy is carried out. The President indicated that while he would look directly to the Board for the execution of this policy, the Board would cooperate with the Intergovernmental Committee, UNRRA, and other interested international organizations. The President stated that he expected the cooperation of all members of the United Nations

and

His Excellency

Dr. T. V. Soong,

Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Chungking.

and other governments in carrying out this difficult but important task. He stated that the existing facilities of the State, Treasury and War Departments would be employed to furnish aid to Axis victims to the fullest extent possible. He stressed that it was urgent that action be taken to forestall the plot of the Nazis to exterminate the Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe".

I am directed by a later portion of this instruction to ascertain the extent to which the Chinese Government is prepared to cooperate in the policy expressed in the President's Executive Order referred to above. I should accordingly appreciate being informed as to the attitude of the Chinese Government on this matter in order that I may report accordingly to my Government.

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

C. E. Gauss

10078

No. 50

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Kunming, Yunnan, China, March 7, 1944.

SUBJECT: Protection of Victims of Enemy
Oppression.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular airgram of January 26, 1944, 7:00 p.m., addressed to certain American missions, a copy of which was forwarded to this Consulate General under cover of Circular Instruction no. 30 from the Embassy at Chungking, in regard to relief of victims of enemy oppression, and to submit a brief report as called for in the fourth paragraph of the airgram.

The legal position of the German Jew in Yunnan was discussed in some length in this Consulate General's despatch no. 42, dated February 12, 1944, addressed to the Department, a copy of which was submitted to the Embassy. It was stated that the Chinese Government had failed to draw the obvious and necessary conclusion that "stateless" Jews could not be regarded as enemy aliens and that the Chinese ordinances dealing with the treatment of enemy aliens should not be applied to them.

One of the less admirable characteristics of the Chinese is their lack of a sense of fair play and their tendency to take advantage of those who are defenseless, or, as the Chinese themselves would express it, to kick a dead horse (踢死马). As far as is known, nothing has been done to assist persecuted minorities. It is often said that the Chinese is the only race capable of absorbing the Jew, and a Jewish racial problem cannot be said to exist here in any form. Nevertheless, there has been observed a growing, and an entirely baseless and illogical tendency to heap scorn on the Jew and to treat him with contempt. Chinese in authority have manifested in many ways their admiration for present day Germany and the fascist, as opposed to the democratic form of government. The only reasonable explanation of the present-day Chinese attitude toward the Jew is that it reflects the effectiveness of Nazi propaganda.

There are, in all probability, not more than twenty German Jews in Yunnan Province. The last known German Jews to come to Yunnan were a Mr. and Mrs. Ludwig HEINRICH, who arrived in Kunming in September, 1940. Mr.

Heinrich

Heinrich was formerly a moderately prosperous traveler in the wholesale woolen trade, and was admitted under the guarantee of another German Jew, a certain Mr. BEAL, an erstwhile employee of his in Germany. Mr. Beal himself, along with three or four other German Jewish mechanics from Shanghai, had previously been brought to Kunming under the auspices of the International Red Cross to work as chauffeurs on the Burma Road.

The Special Yunnan Delegate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is without information in regard to requirements for immigration visas. German Jewish refugees, like other prospective immigrants into China, are understood to be required to submit evidence (1) that they are of good moral character, and (2) that they are sufficiently responsible from a financial point of view to warrant the belief that they are not liable to become a public charge. It is said that in practice immigrants into China from places in the Far East are for the most part granted visas by the Chinese Consul General in Calcutta; doubtful cases are referred by him to the Chinese Foreign Office.

Respectfully yours,

Arthur R. Ringwalt
American Consul

Approved for transmission:

C. E. Gauss

Original ozalid to Department
Copy to Embassy, Chungking.

840.1 - ARR:sam

000791

Second Secretary on detail at Sian, China,
March 9, 1944

No. 3

Subject: PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF ENEMY OPPRESSION

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the Department's airgram of January 26, 1944, 7:00 p.m., in regard to the rescue and relief of victims of enemy oppression and persecution. I received with the air gram an instruction from the Embassy at Chungking to submit a report to the Department in accordance with the terms of the fourth paragraph of the airgram. My report follows herewith.

Summary: While the plight of Jewish, Russian and other refugees domiciled in the Japanese-occupied areas of China is reported to be serious, it would appear that the Japanese have not deliberately maltreated or persecuted them in a manner reminiscent of the atrocities perpetrated by the German Nazis against the Jews of Europe. Very few if any of the refugees in Japanese-occupied Chinese cities appear to have made any effort to emigrate to unoccupied China. The Chinese Government would appear to be without the facilities to extend any substantial aid to such refugees if they were to migrate to unoccupied China. Removal from occupied to unoccupied China probably would not in any event relieve the economic plight of such refugees; indeed it might add to their distress and difficulties. In so far as is known, there are no official regulations barring the entry of war refugees, but unidentified refugees entering unoccupied China would almost certainly be detained for examination. The Chinese official attitude toward the entry of war refugees would appear to be negative and formless, it does not seem to have crystallized. If faced with the concrete problem of the reception and care of any substantial number of war refugees (Jewish, Russian, et cetera), it seems doubtful whether the Chinese reaction would be favorable for various reasons. No report has been received of Chinese failure to admit to the unoccupied areas war refugees seeking exit from the Japanese-occupied areas. End of summary.

Introductory explanation. This report has reference to conditions and developments in China, and more particularly to those relating to occupied China and to the northern and central Provinces of Shensi, Shansi, Honan, Hupeh and Anhwei. Moreover, it has reference primarily to European refugees residing in the Chinese port cities who may have been or may be subjected to Japanese oppression and persecution, the German Nazis apparently having been unable to carry out their policy of racial persecution in the Far East.

Japanese attitude toward refugees. Accurate information
in regard

in regard to the Japanese attitude and actions toward the Jews, "white" Russians and other minorities in Japanese-occupied China is scanty and inconclusive. But on the basis of available information it would appear that the Japanese have not embarked on a deliberate campaign of persecution or elimination of the Jews or other racial minorities that would compare in any wise in barbarity or severity with the acts reportedly perpetrated by the German Nazis against European Jews, Russians, Poles, et cetera. According to Chinese refugees arriving from Shanghai and other Japanese-occupied cities of China, the economic plight of many Jews, Russians, et cetera, is very serious, but no more so than that of millions of Chinese. The bulk of the Jewish and Russian refugee population has from the time of its arrival in Shanghai and other Chinese port cities lived in poverty and on a low economic level; and it would appear that this group has suffered increasingly as economic conditions have progressively deteriorated. This would appear to be true especially of the Jewish population which is reported to have been concentrated by the Japanese authorities in the narrow limits of Hongkew at Shanghai. In so far as is known, actual physical concentration of Jewish, Russian and other European refugees does not appear to have occurred on any marked scale in Japanese-occupied China. It would appear that few, if any, of these refugees in Japanese-occupied China have endeavored to come into unoccupied China. The precise reasons why such migration of these refugees has not developed are unknown: they may be subject to Japanese travel restrictions or they may lack travel funds or they may feel that conditions in unoccupied China would be no more favorable than those obtaining in Japanese-occupied China.

Rescue of Jews and other minorities from Japanese-occupied China. It would appear, in general, that the Chinese Government, which seems hard-put to cope with the problem of aiding the thousands of Chinese students who have been and are now fleeing from Japanese-occupied China to unoccupied China, not to mention its apparent inability to offer any appreciable succor to millions of China's own famine and war stricken population, is scarcely in a position to extend active aid or relief to the suffering Jews, Russians and other racial minorities of Shanghai, Tientsin and other Japanese-occupied Chinese cities. And even if such refugees evinced a desire to come to unoccupied China and if the Chinese Government had the will and the resources to administer relief to such refugees, it is doubtful whether the Chinese Government has the machinery in the Japanese-occupied areas of China to carry out such a program. Moreover, it would appear that their removal, even if it were feasible, would not ameliorate their lot or solve their pressing economic problems. Having due regard to existing conditions and developments, it seems the wiser course that such refugees should remain at Shanghai, Tientsin and other enemy-occupied cities pending conclusion of the war. If it is found that such refugees are in need of urgent relief, it may be found possible to afford them succor through the International Red Cross or the agency of some neutral government.

The extent to which such war refugees are permitted to enter unoccupied China. In so far as is known there is no specific bar to the entry of Jews and other war refugees from the Japanese-occupied areas to unoccupied China. No case is known of the turning back at the border of such refugees. However, based on the experiences of citizens and subjects of various European Powers proceeding from the Japanese-occupied areas of China to this portion of China during the past year
or

or more, it would seem safe to predict that many such refugees would be hindered, delayed and subjected to detainment. More particularly would this be likely to occur in cases involving refugees of former German or Austrian nationality. It is more than likely that, unless well known and guaranteed, such refugees would be regarded by the Chinese authorities with suspicion and as possible German or Japanese agents. Unidentified Russian refugees would most certainly be the objects of Chinese suspicion; it seems doubtful whether they could travel far into unoccupied China without being detained for investigation.

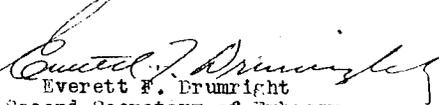
Even if war refugees were allowed to travel freely in unoccupied China, they would find the cost and the difficulties of transport to be very great. It may be stated without qualification that should any appreciable number of European war refugees endeavor to enter unoccupied China by the generally traveled route--that is, via Kaishowtsi in eastern Honan Province--they would tax relief and transport facilities to the limit. Even if it were possible and feasible to transport European war refugees from Shanghai, Tientsin and other enemy-occupied cities to the border of unoccupied China, it would seem that conditions in unoccupied China are most unpropitious for their movement and residence.

The extent to which China encourages and cooperates in the entry of war refugees. Owing to the very limited number of war refugees (other than those of Chinese nationality) coming into unoccupied China, it seems impossible from this vantage point to define with any precision China's real attitude in regard to the entry of European war refugees. It would appear, however, that the Chinese authorities have, if anything, taken a negative attitude in relation to encouraging the entry of war refugees (including those of Chinese nationality) from the Japanese-occupied areas of China. If the Chinese Government were faced with the concrete problem of the admission and care of a substantial number of Jewish or "white" Russian refugees, for instance, it is highly doubtful whether the reception would be a welcome one. In all probability the Chinese Government would take the attitude that Jewish and Russian refugees could not be favored over millions of distressed Chinese war refugees who must shift for themselves. Moreover, as indicated above, the Chinese Government would seem to lack the facilities to receive and absorb any appreciable number of war refugees. Furthermore, as suggested above, the Chinese Government would probably not favor the indiscriminate admission of European refugees owing to the possible danger of espionage.

The extent to which war refugees are not able to enter unoccupied China. No information has been received of the turning back by the Chinese authorities of European war refugees. As has been pointed out above, very few European war refugees appear to have tried to leave Japanese-occupied China for unoccupied China. In the large sense, therefore, this problem does not appear to have arisen. The few Europeans who have fled from Japanese-occupied China to this portion of unoccupied China have found that difficulties with the Chinese authorities are more apt to arise after they have reached a city somewhat to the rear of the border; Sian is a case in point. At least six Europeans have been detained here for varying periods in the course of the past year or more following their arrival from the Japanese-occupied areas.

Respectfully

Respectfully yours,


Everett F. Drumright
Second Secretary of Embassy
on detail at Sian

Approved for transmission:


C. E. Gauss

No.10.

EMBASSY

Office of the Secretary on Detail at
Chengtu, Chengtu, Szechwan, March 12, 1944.

Subject: Protection of Victims of enemy
Oppression.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's air gram dated January 26, 1944, 7:00 p.m., to the Embassy at Chungking, in regard to the relief of victims of enemy oppression.

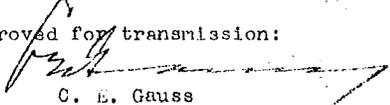
In compliance with the Chungking Embassy's circular instruction no.30 of February 28, 1944, the following is this office's reply to the points raised in the fourth paragraph of the Department's airgram under reference:

So far as this office is aware, nothing in particular is being done by the authorities of this district (Szechwan north of 30° latitude and the whole of Siskang Province) to rescue the Jews and other persecuted minorities from Hitler. Although no actual case of arrival of enemy persecuted minorities has come to the attention of this office, it is believed that should such people, of German or other enemy nationality, arrive here from abroad or from other parts of China they would be regarded and treated as enemy aliens in accordance with the provisions of Chinese Regulations Governing the Treatment of Enemy Aliens. Refugee Jews of non-enemy nationality would, it is believed, be treated by the Chinese authorities of this district with as much consideration as friendly gentiles.

Respectfully yours,

Harry E. Stevens
Second Secretary of Embassy
on Detail at Chengtu

Approved for transmission:


C. E. Gauss
American Ambassador

HES.

000790