Cooperation with other Governments; Latin America; Chile
CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS
LATIN AMERICAN (CHILE)

FOR:

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

FOR MATERIAL REASSURANCES OF LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLICS TO SWITZERLAND SIMILAR TO THOSE GIVEN BY THIS GOVERNMENT RE ISSUANCE OF UP TO 4000 IMMIGRATION VISAS TO REFUGEE CHILDREN FROM AXIS TERRITORY

SEE: PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO SWITZERLAND
(EVACUATION OF ABANDONED CHILDREN FROM FRANCE)
MEM-381

This telegram must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency. (BR)

Secretary of State,

Washington.

857, May 16, 5 p.m.

Foreign Office has just advised that consideration is being given to the suggestion that the Chilean Government admit a specific number of refugees, as referred to in the Department's confidential circular airgram of April 15, 7 p.m., and will submit a definite reply as soon as the necessary study can be made. Department will be informed as soon as a definite reply is received.

BOWERS

RTM

Santiago

Dated May 16, 1944

Rec'd 6:41 p.m.

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamsen, Akzin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Pehle, Reins, Sargoy, Smith, Stampish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. B. White, Files
The number of illegal migration via sea of illegal immigrants to the United Nations is estimated to be over half a million. Some of these immigrants have sought refuge in the United States, where they are treated as illegal immigrants. The government has now authorized the NRC to establish facilities in Colombia to house up to four thousand people. The IOM is responsible for ensuring that these facilities meet all necessary standards.

If there are specific countries in which the Department of State is authorized to provide transportation facilities, the IOM will work with the Department of State to ensure that these facilities are safe and secure. The IOM will also coordinate with the NRC to ensure that these facilities meet all necessary standards.

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suitable transportation facilities from Switzerland to its
country become available. The Government may be informed
that the special representative of the War Refugee Board attached to
the American Legation in Bern will be glad to cooperate with
the diplomatic and consular officers of the other American Rep-
publics in this as well as in all other refugee matters.

Please report by telegraph whether this suggestion has been
favorably received by the Government to which you are accredited
and, if so, the number of children it is prepared to admit.

MISS CHAMNESS (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Axzin, Bernstein, Cohn,
Duficls, Friedman, Garton, Heidel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann,
Mannen, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pehle, Pollok, Reins, Sargoy, Smith,
Standish, Stewart, Weintal, H. H. White, Files
By dear Mr. Bowers:

The Secretary of State has referred to me a copy of your dispatch No. 9106, of March 11, 1944, in reply to the Department of State's circular airgram of January 26, 1944, concerning the war refugees problem in relationship to Chile.

Your cooperation in making this information available is appreciated, and the comments embodied in your dispatch are being carefully considered.

Very truly yours,

J. W. Fehle
Executive Director

The Honorable,
Claude G. Bowers,
The United States Ambassador,
Santiago, Chile.
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., concerning the establishment and purposes of the War Refugee Board and containing a request for a statement as to what is being done in this country to rescue the Jews and other persecuted minorities from Hitler.

During the year 1939, many refugees, among them a large proportion of Jews, entered Chile from Europe. It appears that the normal Chilean immigration practice was liberalized or waived in many cases by unauthorized administrative action and it has been charged that pecuniary rewards were reaped by some of the officials concerned with this matter. At any rate, with the appointment of a new Minister of Foreign Affairs toward the end of that year, a policy of strict enforcement of the visa requirements was adopted which continues in force up to the present time, although there are signs that it has been progressively but slowly relaxed.

Under this policy, it was necessary for the Chilean consular authorities authorized to issue visas to refer applications to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for prior approval, except in routine cases, which might be decided upon the consular officer's personal responsibility. Some of them were reluctant to exercise this discretion and thus referred to the Foreign Office all cases presented to them. There were, in the period from 1940 to 1942, some indications that in the exercise of this discretion advance discrimination was being exercised against Jews. When the Ambassador inquired about this, the Minister of Foreign Affairs readily admitted that since late in 1939 rigid rules had been in force regarding immigration but he denied that there was any discrimination against Jews. This was reported in the Embassy's telegram No. 772 of May 20, 1942, 5:00 p.m.

Yours truly,
Numerous non-Caucasian, some Austrians, Czechs, Poles and Yugoslavs have migrated to Chile to escape the Nazi holocaust. This was not the result of any positive effort on the part of the Chilean Government to extend humanitarian relief but unofficial organizations rendered assistance by providing advice and sometimes financial aid and guarantees. There is some latent anti-Semitism in Chile which is understandable in view of the large proportion of the population of German nationality or descent which is found in the southern part of the country, among whom the Nazi Party has worked intensively over a period of years. German-Jewish sympathizers are found in positions of influence throughout the commerce and industry of the country and some Chileans have been swayed by their views. While this has had some effect in requiring the maintenance of a strict immigration policy, the primary reason is believed to be the economic situation of the country.

During the year 1943 there was agitation in Santiago to procure the departure of recent immigrants from the capital and Valparaiso on the ground that they were overcrowding the small business field and were responsible for the scarcity and soaring cost of housing in the cities. It was announced that some immigrants had failed to fulfill their undertaking upon arrival in Chile to establish themselves in provincial and rural areas rather than in the principal centers of population. Agitation over this subject however was short-lived and seems now to have disappeared completely.

The President of the Zionist Federation of Chile informed the Embassy today that the organization is not now encountering unusual difficulties in making arrangements to assist prospective immigrants. He states that some time ago it became necessary to protest against the obvious discrimination against Jews which was being exercised in the authorization of visits by the consular department of the Foreign Office. The head of that office was replaced and the situation seems to have improved.

The present legal provisions concerning immigration into Chile seem to consist primarily of a delegation of responsibility and general authority to the consular department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, subject of course to the general authority of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In this situation each consular department and there seems to be at this time no complaint on that score.

One of the principal obstacles which a large scale European, and especially Jewish, immigration into Chile may be expected to encounter is the fear that such immigrants would tend to become concentrated in the urban centers, and to overextend the number of small mercantile establishments, whereas the underpopulated rural and agricultural areas would receive little benefit. This is a factor which should be borne in mind in judging the possibilities for absorption of European immigration in Chile in the coming years.

Respectfully yours,

Claude G. Bowers

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3/15/44