Cooperation with Other Governments: Latin America, Guatemala
CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS
LATIN AMERICAN (GUATEMALA)

FOR:

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

1. FOR MATERIAL BE ASSURANCES BY LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLICS TO SWITZERLAND SIMILAR TO THOSE GIVEN BY THIS GOVERNMENT RE ISSUANCE OF UP TO 4000 IMMIGRATION VISAS TO REFUGEES CHILDREN FROM AXIS TERRITORY

2. FOR MATERIAL RELATIVE TO SUPPORT OF GUATEMALA RE THIS GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO GERMAN GOVERNMENT, WITH A VIEW TO ARRANGING AN EXCHANGE AGAINST GERMAN NATIONALS IN WESTERN HEMISPHERE OF INTERNEES HOLDING LATIN AMERICAN PASSPORTS AND PAPERS

SEE: 1. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: EVACUATION TO SWITZERLAND
(EVACUATION OF ABANDONED CHILDREN FROM FRANCE)

2. PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: OTHER MEANS OF EFFECTING RESCUES
(RECOGNITION OF LATIN AMERICAN PASSPORTS)
Secretary of State
Washington
A-220, May 19, 6 p.m., 1944.

Reference Department's Secret Circular Airgram of May 17, 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m., A-220, 5 p.m.

I have discussed with the Foreign Minister the points raised in the above mentioned Airgram and have today received a Secret and Confidential Memorandum from the Foreign Office requesting the assistance of this Embassy in transmitting a request to the Government of Switzerland that there be granted to all persons in enemy-occupied territory who possess Guatemalan documents or claim the right to Guatemalan nationality the fullest protection and rights, privileges and immunities which are enjoyed by Guatemalans whose nationality has been duly proved.

The Government of Guatemala, prompted by lofty humanitarian sentiments, regrets this protection in favor of claimed Guatemalans but reserves the right to investigate each specific case and to reject at a later date persons whose nationality cannot be conclusively proved.

The protection which is non-solicited in favor of such persons does not involve economic assistance of any kind nor the right of the interested persons to be admitted to the national territory of Guatemala until their nationality shall be duly established.

The text and translation of the communication cited above will be forwarded promptly by courier.

LONG

848

Washington

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akaz, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gishon, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McManus, Bain, Bargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Stein, H. D., White, Pollo, Ellis.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 14 1972
Embassy

Guatemala, May 16, 1944.

Subject: Evacuation of Refugee Children from Europe.

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

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular telegram dated April 26, 7:35 p.m., 1944, outlining the Department's policy with regard to the acceptance by the United States of up to 4000 refugee children under immigration visas and requesting that assurances be sought of the Government to which I am accredited that a proportionate number of children would be accepted by it in like circumstances.

The matter having been broached to the Government of Guatemala in the Embassy's note no. 154 of April 26, 1944, I have now received in reply, a note from the Foreign Office (no. 6130 dated May 11, 1944), which is enclosed in copy and translation. It will be observed that the Guatemalan Government has agreed to accept up to 1000 children under the conditions outlined, but would prefer that so far as it will be possible, these children be selected from French and Belgian refugees.

Respectfully yours,

Donz Long.

Enclosures:

1/2/ Copy and translation of Foreign Office note no. 6130,
May 11, 1944.

848 WCA/Js

Original and photostat to Department.
No. 11/4.

Guatemala, May 16, 1944.

Subject: Evacuation of Refugee Children from Europe.

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

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Respectfully yours,

Don C. Long.

Enclosures:

1/2/1 Copy and translation of Foreign Office note no. 6130, May 11, 1944.

S/2/9

WCA/Js

Original and hectograph to Department.
Enclosure No. 1 to dispatch No. 1104 May 15, 1944, from American Embassy, Guatemala.

**COPY**

SECRETARÍA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES
REPUBLICA DE GUATEMALA
SECCION DIPLOMÁTICA
NO. 6150.

340-R (73-0) Guatemala, 11 de mayo de 1944.

Señor Embajador:

He tenido el honor de recibir la atenta note de Vuestra Excelencia, número 164, de fecha 25 de abril de 1944, en la cual se sirve informar acerca de la disposición del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos, de recibir en su territorio cuatro mil niños refugiados, de los que actualmente se encuentran en Europa abandonados o huérfanos, a consecuencia de los rigores de la guerra.

Tomó debo nota de las condiciones de esa aceptación, que Vuestra Excelencia tiene a bien explicarme en su atenta comunicación.

Vuestra Excelencia se sirve trasmitir invitación del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos al de Guatemala, para colaborar en esa obra de socorro, y recibir, en condiciones similares, un númerodeterminado de esos niños, víctimas de la guerra y, para el efecto, ofrece la contribución y ayuda necesarias de la ar Relief Board.

Me es grato manifestar a Vuestra Excelencia que el Gobierno de Guatemala accede gustosamente a participar en la humanitaria labor de socorrer a esos niños desamparados, y está dispuesto a recibir en su territorio un número proporcional al aceptado por los Estados Unidos.

En consecuencia, pláceme rogar a Vuestra Excelencia su valiosa cooperación para que se hagan los arreglos necesarios a fin de que el Gobierno de Suiza dé refugio provisional a cien niños, que serán trasladados a territorio guatemalteco, tan pronto como sea posible.

Atentamente ruego a Vuestra Excelencia se sirva tomar nota de que, aún cuando en esta participación el Gobierno de Guatemala no quiere hacer distinciones por motivos de nacionalidad, raza o religión, mucho agradecería que los cien niños para quienes proporcionará refugio en esta República, se seleccionen, de preferencia, entre niños francoses o belgas.

En su oportunidad, esta Secretaría dará las instrucciones necesarias al representante guatemalteco en el lugar que se indique, para que otorge las visas necesarias en la documentación de los niños mencionados.

Aprovecho la oportunidad para renoverle, Señor Embajador, el testimonio de mi más alta y distinguida consideración.

(Signed) Carlos Salazar,

Exceletísimo Señor Señor Bosan Long,

Embajador Extraordinario y Plenipotenciario de los Estados Unidos,

Ciudad. [Fecha]

Copiedes
Mr. Ambassador:

I have had the honor of receiving Your Excellency's courteous note No. 154 of April 25, 1944, in which you informed me of the willingness of the Government of the United States to receive in its territory four thousand refugee children, from those who are now abandoned or orphaned in Europe as a consequence of the hardships of war.

I have taken due note of the conditions of this acceptance, which Your Excellency is good enough to set forth in your courteous communication.

Your Excellency is good enough to transmit an invitation from the United States Government to the Guatemalan government to collaborate in this relief work and to receive, in a similar manner, a specified number of these children, victims of war; and, to this end, offers the contribution and necessary help of the War Relief Board.

I take pleasure in informing Your Excellency that the Government of Guatemala gladly accepts participation in the humanitarian work of aiding these helpless children, and is willing to receive in its territory a number proportionate to that accepted by the United States.

In consequence I am pleased to beg Your Excellency's valuable cooperation so that arrangements necessary may be made for the Guatemalan Government to give provisional refuge to one hundred children, who will be brought to Guatemalan territory as soon as possible.

I courteously beg Your Excellency to note that, even though in this participation the Government of Guatemala does not wish to make nationality distinctions, or any of race or religion, it would appreciate it if the hundred children to be given refuge in this Republic might be selected, preferably, from French or Belgian children.

In due time this Secretary will give appropriate instructions to the Guatemalan representative at the place indicated for the issuance of the necessary visas on the documents of these children.

I avail myself of this opportunity, Mr. Ambassador, to renew the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

CARLOS M. ZAPATA
His Excellency, Joaquin Long,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States, Guatemala.

Guatemala, May 11, 1944.
BY COURIER

Secretary of State

Washington

A-222, May 8, 5 p.m.

Reference Department's secret airgram A-308, May 1, 4:14-speaking airgram of May 1, 7:35 p.m., regarding relief measures for certain persons holding Guatemalan documents now interned by Germany.

This matter was taken up in strict confidence yesterday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs who, after consultation with President Obice, has furnished the Embassy with a confidential memorandum reading in translation as follows:

"The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala in entire agreement with the conversation held today with His Excellency, the Ambassador of the United States, takes pleasure in indicating that the points discussed are accepted in the following terms:

The Government of Guatemala authorizes the Government of the United States to undertake negotiations for the exchange of persons presenting Guatemalan passports against German nationals in this Hemisphere.

It is understood that the bearers of such passports who are not desirable as immigrants to Guatemala will not be admitted into the country.

The Government of Switzerland, as the protecting power of Guatemalan citizens, will be requested to assert the rights granted to interned civilians in conformity with the Geneva Convention.

If it should be suspected that any of the passports were incorrect, the Government of Guatemala will maintain its right to cancel or invalidate them, but it will do that when the bearers have been placed in safety.

It is understood that Guatemala will not assume any additional obligation as a result of its acquiescence in the present petition of the Government of the United States to which it accedes, inspired by humanitarian sentiments and as a courtesy to the Government of the United States."

DECLASSIFIED
(State Dept. Letter 1-11-72)

By R. H. Parks Date: SEP 14, 1972
The Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me in the course of our conversation that he had not been approached by the Spanish Minister in the matter. The Papal Nuncio had taken up with him the admission of Jewish refugees to Guatemala, to which he had replied that the Guatemalan Government felt that it had already admitted as many such persons as the country could readily absorb at the present time.

It is anticipated that the communication of the Guatemalan Government to the Government of Switzerland will be made through this Embassy. If any such communication is forthcoming in the course of the next few days, I shall remind the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the urgency thereof.

A.M. R.

COHEN, Abrahamson, Aknin, Bernstein, Cohn, DeBois, Friedman, Gaston, Gelbl, Laughin, Leiser, Lutford, Van, Nazerman, Nairn, McDermoch, Rain, Serjoy, Smith, Stewirts, Stewart, Weintraub, M. D. White, Foble, Miles.
CIRCULAR AIRGRAM

FOR THE PERSONAL AND CONFIDENCE OF THE AMBASSADORS AT PANAMA, HABANA, CIUDAD TRUJILLO, BOGOTA, LIMA, SANTIAGO, MONTEVIDEO AND MEXICO, D.F.

With further reference to the Department's circular airgram of January 20, 7 p.m., and to subsequent communications on refugee matters, you are informed that the Department has now authorized the American consular officers in Switzerland to issue up to four thousand quota immigration visas to refugee children up to sixteen years of age without regard to religion, nationality or stateless status, to close relatives residing in enemy, enemy-controlled or occupied territory, or to the availability of means of transportation to the United States. The purpose of this authorization is to facilitate the escape to Switzerland of orphaned or abandoned children by giving assurance to the Swiss Government that these children will not remain in Switzerland after the termination of hostilities in Europe. The authorization contains provisions for the continued renewal of the visas until such time as adequate transportation facilities to the United States become available. Private sources have posted bond with the Attorney General of the United States to assure this Government that the designating children will not become public charges.

If there are private agencies in the country to which you are accredited willing and able to undertake a program for the care of refugee children, the War Refugee Board is confident that it can make arrangements to provide those agencies with adequate funds for the maintenance, education and welfare of as many children as the Government of that country would be willing to admit. Should it prove necessary, funds would undoubtedly be available to meet transportation expenses from Switzerland to that country.

Kindly approach appropriate officials of the Government to which you are accredited, inform them of the foregoing and request them to give assurance to the Swiss Government through their diplomatic mission in Bern that they will accept up to a fixed number of refugee children in a manner similar to that of this Government. For the information of the Government to which you are accredited, it is conservatively estimated that there are in France alone eight to ten thousand abandoned or orphaned refugee children. Should the Government be willing to make this humanitarian offer, please request the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to authorize the chief of mission in Bern to issue the appropriate number of immigration visas and to maintain their validity until suitable
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 Republic in this as well as in all other refugee matters.

Please report by telegram whether this migration 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 Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Aknin, Bernstein, Cohn, Dubois, Friedmann, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Luxford, Mann, Mannon, Margina, McCormack, Paul, Pohle, Pollak, Rains, Sergoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weisstein, H. D. White, Files.
CONTROL COPY

No.1002. Guatemala, April 5, 1944.

Subject: Rescue and Relief of Jews of Europe and Other Victims of Enemy Persecution.

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

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular telegram of January 26, 1944, 7 p.m., setting forth the policy and machinery established for the rescue and relief of Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution.

In compliance with the telegram cited, the following information is provided with regard to the current situation relative to the policy and activities in Guatemala for the rescue and relief of refugees.

As is apparent from past policy and local sentiment, there is little or nothing being done officially in this country toward the rescue and relief of persecuted elements in Europe, although permission has been granted for between 600 and 1000 refugees to enter Guatemala since 1933. Guatemala is essentially an agricultural country, and both its industrial development and its consumption of manufactured goods are limited by the generally low level of purchasing power. While local sentiment does not positively discourage the immigration of European elements, there is a strong feeling against permitting the entrance of persons whose commercial activities would result in the establishment of new firms to share in the existing trade which is capable of little expansion.

With regard to the lettered points in the third paragraph of page 2 of the Department's telegram in reference, the following information is provided, principally from unofficial sources:

a) The Guatemalan Government is understood to permit the entry of refugees for permanent residence who are able to obtain guarantee of support from relatives who are already residents or nationals of the country, and in some cases refugees have been able to gain entry for permanent residence without local sponsors. However, in all cases entry is granted only under the provision of the Guatemalan Immigration Law which requires that immigrants may not open new commercial establishments, act as agents, or engage in any remunerative occupation except agriculture without express permission from the Guatemalan Government. Only one refugee is known to have purchased a coffee property and to be engaged in agriculture, but a number have
have been granted permission to establish small plants for the manufacture of articles not previously produced in this country, and to engage in certain types of business. However, there were many abuses of the entry privilege, and in March 1939 the Government found it necessary to issue a decree closing any business establishments owned or operated by refugees, and requiring the registration of business houses and the licensing of agents working on a commission basis. The actual effect of this decree was the closing of a number of small retail establishments, but several of the refugee manufacturing establishments as well as refugee commission agents were permitted to continue their operations.

The Israelite Societies of Guatemala have on occasion guaranteed refugees seeking admission to Guatemala and apparently during the years following 1933 and up to our entry into the war, substantial numbers of Jewish refugees from Europe were admitted on a temporary basis. The Consulate General reports that a large number of dossiers were transferred from points in Europe, principally Germany, and received final action in our Consulate General here. It is believed that persons who entered Guatemala on a temporary basis, pending admission to the United States, had less trouble in gaining admittance to the country than those who sought permanent residence here.

In July, 1942, the Embassy was supplied by the Israelite Societies of Guatemala, through the Naval Attaché, several lists of persons in the refugee categories, principally of the Jewish faith, who had been admitted to this country subsequent to Hitler's entry into power. Those lists may be briefly recapitulated as follows:

**List No. 1:**
- Jewish refugees for whom the Israelite Societies of Guatemala could vouch without qualification (close relatives of members of the congregation) 159

**List No. 2:**
- Jewish refugees who came to Guatemala without having relatives in the country, but whom the Israelite Societies regard as fully reliable politically 63

**List No. 3:**
- German Gentile wives of Jewish refugees 5

**List No. 4:**
- Persons registered as "Jewish refugees" with the police but who, as far as the Israelite Societies know, are not Jews 10

**List No. 5:**
List No. 5: Baptised Jews who registered with the Police as "Germans" and were so treated by the authorities (these people were regarded as politically "OK" by the Israelite Societies)........2

List No. 6: Persons for whom the Israelite Societies could not vouch because they had no knowledge of their antecedents (the Israelite Societies had no suspicions of these people)..............6

List No. 7: Persons allegedly of Jewish ancestry with whom the Israelite Societies had no contact........................................3

Total........248

It is not believed that the above number represents more than a small part of the refugees now in Guatemala. The Minister of Foreign Relations stated recently that during 1942 Guatemala permitted the entry of 600 refugees at the request of the London Committee, and while some of these may be included in the lists of the Israelite Societies, the duplication is not believed to be extensive. In addition, there is a considerable number of persons whose Jewish ancestry is not sufficient to include them in the Israelite Societies, but who are not Aryans and therefore were forced to leave Europe. In the eyes of the Guatemalan government, these persons are no doubt considered as Jewish refugees.

b) As stated above, it cannot be said that Guatemala encourages the entry of refugees into the country, especially for permanent residence.

c) So far as the Embassy has been able to ascertain, there have been no recent cases where refugees have been denied entry or turned back at the border, and although Guatemala would probably cooperate in providing a temporary haven to refugees on route to a permanent destination, the government would undoubtedly require assurances that their stay would not be permanent, and would insist on a careful examination of applicants to guard against any masquerading of Axis agents as refugees.

Last any impression be conveyed that Guatemala is basically anti-Semitic, it might be well to recall that for many years prior to the advent of the present incumbent, Jewish bankers controlled the business of this country and manipulated it for their own benefit and frequently against the interests of the Guatemalans themselves. The Guatemalans no doubt feel that any single racial or religious group exercising such heavy influence would be bad for the country.

During
During the life of the peso its violent fluctuations are felt to have been controlled by the Jewish bankers and money changers, most of whom, it will be recalled, no longer operate in this country since the unit of exchange has been changed from the peso to the Quetzal, which from the beginning has been pegged to the Dollar.

Jewish merchants still dominate most of the local commerce, in many instances to the disadvantage of Guatemalan citizens. The majority of the hardware trade, a large part of the wholesale textile business, and many retail establishments are owned by Jewish merchants who, in a number of cases, have not established a good reputation for their co-religionists here.

These simple observations may explain in part why the government would not be likely to look with enthusiasm upon a new influx of Jewish refugees, lest they repeat the disagreeable experiences of the past.

If, in the light of the conditions reflected hereinbefore, it is desired that this matter be pursued further at the moment, I shall be pleased to do so, but would prefer further instructions from the Department. It might be, if any proposal is to be made, that our chances of success would be enhanced if such a proposal covers the acceptance of a specific number of persons for a specific time, en route to an ultimate destination, rather than imply the permanent absorption of any large number of persons of foreign origin within the space of a short time.

Respectfully yours,

Boss Long.

848
EC/WCA/KL/JS

Original and hectograph to Department.