

Cooperation with Other Governments: Latin America: Panama

000212

CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS:
LATIN AMERICAN (PANAMA)

FOR:

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

FOR MATERIAL RE LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLICS' ASSURANCES 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)

000213



3. War Refugee Bd
(Lias)

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Panamá, R. P., September 26, 1944

AIR MAIL

No. 439

SUBJECT: Visit by Jacob LANDAU of Jewish
Relief Committee to Panamá

[Redacted]

CONTROL COPY

3 m R, B
Mr. Refugee Bd
(Lias)

1 m Mr. [unclear]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular
airgram of July 13, 1944, 12:30 p.m. and to report that Mr.
Jacob LANDAU of the American Jewish Committee, New York,
called on me this morning in connection with his trip to
certain Latin American countries, sponsored by the War Re-
fugee Board. He stated that he would be here only overnight
but that upon his return in about a month he planned to
approach the Foreign Ministry and hoped for my support, with
a view to obtaining a modification of Article 15 of Panamanian
Law No. 54 of December 24, 1938, so as to eliminate Palestin-
ians from the list of nationalities whose admission into Panamá
is prohibited by that law. The legislation referred to is re-
inforced by the Panamanian Constitution of 1941, which in
Article 23 of Title II states that the immigration into Panamá
of the following races is prohibited:

"The negro race whose original language is
other than Spanish; The yellow race and the
races originating in India, Asia Minor and
North Africa."

I suggested to Mr. Landau that he confer with my British
colleague and offered to arrange an interview. My colleague
has informed me that he has requested instructions from his
Government as to the attitude which he should take regarding
Mr. Landau's proposal and I should appreciate being informed
similarly by the Department before Mr. Landau's return to Panamá
on or about October 25.

Respectfully yours,

A. M. Warren

FPL:fa

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 14 1972

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*War Ref
Ad (M)
Pelle*

A-704
X-85 pa

RECEIVED BY UNIT
AUG 22 1944
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE

August 18, 1944

AMEMBASSY,
PANAMA.

Reference made to your 84 of July 14.

Please inform the Foreign Minister of Panama that the Department and War Refugee Board appreciate the offer of economic aid in the emergency refugee sheltering program made by Memorandum note 981 of July 10.

HULL
slw

HULL

WID:KLV:RG
8/18/44

CCs

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RECEIVED
REFUGEE BOARD
WASHINGTON, D. C.
AUG 22 PM 3 38

AIRGRAM TO ANEMBASSY, PANAMA

References made to your 84 of July 14.

Please inform the Foreign Minister of Panama that the Department and War Refugee Board appreciate the offer of economic aid in the emergency refugee sheltering program made by Panamanian note 961 of July 10.

9:50 a.m.
August 18, 1944

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Mann, Mannon, McCormack, Cable Control Files

PA.
RAks:ml 8/18/44 L.S.L.

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3 Year Refugee Board
CONTROL COPY

Panamá, July 25, 1944

AIR MAIL

No. 116
X

SUBJ: CP: War Refugee Board

MEMORANDUM

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular airgram, June 18, 1944, regarding the President's special message to Congress reporting on the efforts of the Government to rescue the Jews and other victims of enemy oppression from Axis-occupied Europe.

There are forwarded attached copy and office translation of the Foreign Office's reply to this Embassy's memorandum transmitting a copy of the special message in question in which Panamá adheres to this unselfish task.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

John J. Nuccio
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure:

Copy and office translation of
Memorandum of July 12, 1944.

VIC/mw

Enclosure No. 1 to Dispatch No. 116
dated July 25, 1944, from Embassy, Panama

COPY

MEMORANDUM

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores
Departamento Diplomático

El Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores ha recibido el Memorandum de la U. S. Embajada de los Estados Unidos de América, de fecha 25 de junio último, en la cual se transcribe el mensaje especial que el excelentísimo señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos envió al Congreso de su país, en el que se indica la sacra de los esfuerzos de su Gobierno para rescatar a los jueces y otras víctimas de la opresión europea y que, de manera enérgica trata de la acción tomada por el propio Presidente para establecer un embargo de mercancías para los reclusos, en Puerto Ontario, Oswego, Nueva York.

El Gobierno de Panamá, que se halla identificado con el de los Estados Unidos y con los de las demás Naciones Unidas en la gran cruzada de la rehabilitación de los pueblos oprimidos y de la restitución de los derechos de los hombres, acoge con singular beneplácito y simpatía la noble iniciativa del ilustre Presidente Roosevelt. En esta obra, inspirada en los más elevados principios de humanidad, ha reiterado el jefe de la acción norteamericana la realización práctica de sus elevados propósitos. El mensaje especial referido es la expresión de auténtico sentimiento de humanitarismo, de amplitud de miras y acción generosa, que constituyen la razón de la magna lucha que hoy se libra en el mundo.

El Gobierno de Panamá se hace solidario con esta altruista obra que en el bien de la justicia, y de los postulados de un mundo mejor, ha emprendido y lleva adelante el mandatario norteamericano.

Panamá, 12 de julio de 1944.

C. I.

Comodoro

03 War Refugee Board
Chicago

Panamá, July 14, 1944

AIR MAIL

No. 84

SUBJECT: War Refugee Board

CONTROL COPY

[REDACTED]

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's secret circular airgram of June 20, 1:30 p.m., 1944, regarding the President's announcement of the use of the Army Camp Fort Ontario at Oswego, New York, as an emergency refugee shelter to house one thousand refugees who are being brought to the United States from Italy without regard to the regular immigration procedure. The contents of the secret circular airgram were brought to the attention of the Foreign Minister of Panamá and there is forwarded attached a copy and office translation of Note D. P. No. 961, July 10, 1944, in reply. It should be noted that in the reply above mentioned the Foreign Minister states that it is the policy of the Government of Panamá to cooperate to the best of its abilities in this effort to rescue the victims of Nazi oppression. The Foreign Minister also states that the Government of Panamá will offer its economic aid in proportion to Panamá's capacity.

The Foreign Minister has also requested that the President of the United States be informed of the proposal of the Government of Panamá, and should this offer be accepted, that the Government of Panamá be so informed in order that the amount which the Panamanian Government will contribute to this great work of salvation may be set aside.

Respectfully yours,

A. M. Warren

Enclosures: ✓

Copy and translation of Note No. 961
of July 10, 1944.

VLC/rw

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept Letter, 1-11-78
By R. H. Parks, Date SEP 14 1972

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 84
dated July 14, 1944, from Embassy, Panamá

COPY

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores
Departamento Diplomático

D. P. No. 961

Panamá, 10 de julio de 1944

Señor Embajador:

Tengo a honra avisar a Vuestra Excelencia recibo de su atenta nota No. 7, del 27 de junio próximo pasado, en la cual tiene a bien referirse a mi comunicación No. 828, del 13 del mismo mes y a las otras comunicaciones cruzadas entre esa Embajada y este Ministerio, en relación con los planes de la Junta de Refugiados de Guerra, para facilitar el escape de las numerosas personas oprimidas y perseguidas en los países ocupados por Alemania.

Vuestra Excelencia ha tenido a bien informarme en detalle con respecto a la intervención directa del Excelentísimo Presidente de los Estados Unidos, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, en el sentido de disponer que el Campo del Ejército situado en el Fuerte de Ontario, Oswego, New York, fuese destinado a refugio de emergencia para mil refugiados que serán traídos inmediatamente a los Estados Unidos desde Italia, sin tomar en cuenta los procedimientos ordinarios de inmigración. Este acto, sin duda, reafirma de manera fehaciente el espíritu humanitario del Presidente Roosevelt, del cual ya ha dado numerosas y palpables muestras.

Me informa además Vuestra Excelencia de las otras medidas ordenadas por el Presidente de los Estados Unidos y que están siendo llevadas a cabo por la Junta de Refugiados de Guerra que tienen por propósito salvar a numerosas víctimas de los crueles efectos de la política inhumana de Hitler.

Mi Gobierno ha visto con singular simpatía las diferentes muestras, reafirmadas por acciones, de humanidad, caridad y ayuda que el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos, por iniciativa de su Presidente, ha dado en estos momentos de difícil situación para gran sector de los pueblos europeos. Existe en el ánimo de mi Gobierno el deseo de cooperar en la medida de sus posibilidades en este esfuerzo por rescatar a las víctimas de la opresión nazi.

Aun cuando el Gobierno de Panamá está animado de la mejor buena voluntad para cooperar efectivamente en esta noble cruzada de liberación humana, se ha encontrado con que las

facilidades

Su Excelencia
Ayra M. Warren,
Embajador Extraordinario y Plenipotenciario de
los Estados Unidos de América.
Ciudad.

facilidades de refugio adecuado en el territorio de la República, aún para pocas víctimas, son casi nulas. Por tal motivo, mi Gobierno, deseoso siempre de coadyuvar en esta empresa, está dispuesto a ofrecer su cooperación económica en proporción a sus posibilidades.

Me permito, pues, solicitar a Vuestra Excelencia que haga del conocimiento del señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos, los propósitos de mi Gobierno, y de ser aceptada su oferta, agradeceré a Vuestra Excelencia comunicármelo para disponer el monto con el cual mi Gobierno contribuirá en esta magna obra de salvamento.

Válgome de la oportunidad para reiterar a Vuestra Excelencia las seguridades de mi más alta y distinguida consideración.

(Fdo) Samuel Lewis
Samuel Lewis
Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores

Copied: mw

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Enclosure No. 2 to despatch No. 84
dated July 14, 1944, from Embassy, Panamá

TRANSLATION

Ministry, of Foreign Affairs
Diplomatic Department

D. P. No. 961

Panamá, July 10, 1944

Mr. Ambassador:

I have the honor to advise Your Excellency of the receipt of your Note No. 7 dated June 27, 1944, in which you referred to my Note No. 828 dated June 13, and other communications which have been exchanged between the Embassy and this Ministry in relation to the plans of the War Refugee Board to facilitate the escape of numerous oppressed and persecuted peoples in the countries occupied by Germany.

Your Excellency informed me in detail regarding the direct intervention of the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in setting aside the Army Camp at Fort Ontario, at Oswego, New York, as an emergency refugee shelter for one thousand refugees who are being brought immediately to the United States from Italy without regard to the regular immigration procedure. This gain reaffirms in a convincing manner the humanitarian spirit of President Roosevelt, which has been shown repeatedly in many ways.

Your Excellency also informed me of the other measures ordered by the President of the United States and being carried out by the War Refugee Board for the purpose of saving the numerous victims of Hitler's inhuman cruelties.

My Government has viewed with sympathy the various examples, reaffirmed by actions, of humanitarianism, charity and aid which the Government of the United States, through the initiative of the President, has offered in these difficult moments for a large part of the European states. It is my Government's intention to cooperate to the best of its abilities in this effort to rescue the victims of Nazi oppression.

Although my Government has the greatest desire to cooperate effectively in this noble cause to free these peoples, it has found the facilities for refugees in the territory of the Republic, even for a small number of victims, to be non-existent. For this reason, my Government, always willing to cooperate in this undertaking, is disposed to offer its economic aid in accordance with its capacity.

His Excellency
Avra M. Warren,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of the United States of America.

Permit

Permit me to request that Your Excellency bring to the attention of the President of the United States the intention of my Government, and should this offer be accepted, that the Government of Panamá be so informed in order that the amount which the Panamanian Government will contribute to this great work of salvation may be set aside.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

(Sgd) Samuel Lewis
Samuel Lewis
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Translated:am



3 War Refugee Board (as Standard)

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Panamá, June 6, 1944

CONTROL COPY

AIR MAIL

No. 5538

SUBJECT: War Refugee Board

*3 W RB
3 War Refugee Board
(Trans)
War in Bonds*

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.



Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's confidential circular airgram, April 15, 1944, 7:00 p.m., regarding the plan of the War Refugee Board to facilitate the escape to Switzerland of orphaned and abandoned children.

The substance of this airgram was duly transmitted to the Panamanian Foreign Office by Note No. 871, April 28, 1944, but up to the present time, despite several informal reminders, no answer or acknowledgment of any kind has been received.

By memorandum dated April 27 the Embassy also advanced the suggestion that the Panamanian reply of February 10 to the Embassy's memorandum notifying Panamá of the President's Executive Order of January 22, 1944 establishing the War Refugee Board (see my despatch No. 5166, February 12, 1944) be further implemented by the issuance of a declaration of policy similar to that contained in the Executive Order mentioned, as requested in the Department's circular airgram of February 29, 1944, 7:30 p.m. Up to the present moment, however, no reply to this memorandum has been received.

In this connection I might mention that when The Honorable Elihu D. STONE visited Panamá in May, 1944, I escorted him to make a courtesy call on the President of Panamá. At this time Mr. Stone explained the program for assisting Jewish refugees that he was engaged in, and although the President showed interest in the matter, he did not indicate any tangible contribution that Panamá might make in this regard. In this connection, I refer to my despatch No. 5133, February 4, 1944.

I shall not fail to report any further developments.

Respectfully yours,

John S. Muccio
John S. Muccio
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

VLC/mw

Miss Hadell

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Parks Date **SEP 14 1972**

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WRB (Giles) #

No. 5166
x

Panama, February 12, 1944

SUBJECT: Memorandum Received from Foreign
Office in Connection with Reception
of War Refugees by Panama.

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

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 5133 of February 4, 1944, which reported in part that in compliance with the instructions contained in the Department's circular airgram of January 26 concerning the measures ordered by President ROOSEVELT for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution, I had sent a memorandum to the Foreign Office explaining the policies expressed in the President's Executive Order concerning war refugees and stating the President's hope that the United Nations would be disposed to cooperate in this connection.

There are now enclosed a copy and informal office translation of the memorandum in reply received from the Foreign Office on February 12.

Respectfully yours,

John J. Muccio
Charge d'Affaires a.i.

✓ Enclosure:
Copy and translation of
Foreign Office Memorandum

SWR:mr

000225

Translation

M E M O R A N D U M

The Ministry of Foreign Relations has received the Memorandum of the United States Embassy dated February 4 stating that the President of the United States has issued an Executive Order by means of which there is created a Board composed of the Secretaries of State, Treasury, and War in order to work for the rescue and relief of the Jews and other victims of Axis oppression who are in imminent danger of death. In said Memorandum it is also stated that it is the hope of the President of the United States that all members of the United Nations and other Governments will cooperate in the realization of this difficult but important task.

This initiative, which constitutes a new proof of the noble principles of human solidarity which inspire His Excellency Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, is received with all sympathy and enthusiasm by the Government of the Republic of Panama, which will lend its decided cooperation to the realization of this noble project.

The Government of the Republic of Panama hopes that the rapid and opportune intervention of the United Nations and of Friendly Governments will effectively contribute to put an end to the horrors of persecution which so many victims are suffering in Europe.

Panama, February 10, 1944

(SRR:ar)

RECEIVED
SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.
FEB 10 1944

000225



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

VD
CEA

No. 5133

Panama, February 4, 1944

SUBJECT: Reception of War Refugees by
Panama

RD & Rehle

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FEB 9 9 49 AM

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

VISA DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
FEB 10 1944
Department of State

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

S 440:

840-48 Refugees

I have the honor to refer to the Department's circular airgram of January 26 concerning the measures ordered by President ROOSEVELT for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution. The airgram directed that a report be made concerning such action as Panama might be taking to assist in the rescue of Jews and other persecuted minorities.

Because of the situation which exists here today, Panama has not been extending aid to war refugees, and it is not likely that the Republic will be anxious in the future to receive Jews and members of other minorities who are being persecuted abroad. During the years 1936, 1937, and 1938 a great many refugees from Europe, mostly Jews, arrived in Panama in transit to South and Central America. Some actually intended to go on but experienced unexpected difficulties in connection with securing visas for the countries further to the North and South. Others, in obtaining Panamanian transit visas, apparently never had any intention of proceeding any further. At any rate, they settled in the capital cities of Panama and Colon and for the most part entered into commercial activities, in which they were extremely successful, to the alarm of Panamanian businessmen who accused them of low business ethics and commercial skulduggery of all kinds. In fact, so many Jewish refugees from Europe established themselves in Panama that even resident Jews of foreign birth in business here became alarmed and discontinued their efforts to assist the migration of these people. Of late Panamanian businessmen have been increasingly vociferous in their denunciation of the foreign refugees who have settled here, and

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840.48 REFUGEES/5142

PS /MJN

who

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who have become most successful commercial competitors. The Nationalization of Commerce Law, which subsequently was implemented by decree, restricts the participation of foreigners in Panamanian trade, and, according to responsible officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, was drafted and passed solely for the purpose of protecting Panamanian businessmen from the commercial activities of European refugees, accused of operating under low ethical standards and of contributing nothing to the social and economic welfare of the country. For these reasons, the Republic of Panama has so far taken no steps to encourage the immigration of further war refugees, particularly those who are Jewish.

The migration of a great many war refugees is effectively prohibited by Decree No. 110 of December 22, 1941, which places in the class of those persons whose immigration is absolutely prohibited all persons born in Axis countries or in those countries at war with Panama or any of her Allies. The Decree also rigidly restricts immigration from all countries occupied by the Axis or by any nation at war with Panama or any of her Allies. No effort has been made to alter this Decree, and it does not appear that any effort will be made under the actual circumstances. Because of the Decree no war refugees are reported to have entered Panama for some time, and in fact it is very likely that if a war refugee now resident in Panama but not a citizen of the Republic should leave the country for any reason he would find it exceedingly difficult to return.

In view of the fact that the Government of Panama has effectively prohibited the migration of war refugees and is actively engaged in discriminating against those already resident here, I do not feel that it would be appropriate at this time to attempt to make strong representations looking toward inducing the Republic to cooperate in the policy of rescuing the victims of enemy oppression. It is possible that Panama might accept a few refugees of the agricultural class but I believe the Government would not be sympathetic to the idea of aiding in the relief and rescue of victims of enemy oppression as a whole. The obstacle which is interfering with Panamanian cooperation in this regard is, as stated, the fear that war refugees would immediately enter into commercial activities here, in opposition to the prevailing spirit of nationalism. Panama presents excellent opportunities in the retail commercial field and so far foreigners have apparently always been able to exploit these opportunities better than have the Panamanians themselves.

With regard to inducing Panama to cooperate in carrying out the policy of the rescuing of war refugees, it

would

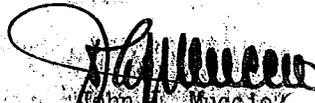
000221

would first be necessary to persuade the Government to modify the Decree mentioned above. I believe that no little pressure would have to be applied to accomplish this. Once it had been done, the Panamanian Government might be persuaded to accept refugees who are experts in agriculture. But it must be recalled that the influx of even a limited number of refugees is quite noticeable in a country with in the neighborhood of only 600,000 inhabitants, the majority of whom are concentrated in the two largest cities. On the other hand, there are large areas in the Republic which are uninhabited and undeveloped. The Panamanian Government might be more favorably inclined to accept those refugees who were willing to undergo the rigors of colonization of undeveloped areas in a tropical climate.

In compliance with the instructions contained in the Department's airgram under reference, I have sent a memorandum to the Foreign Office explaining the policies expressed in the President's Executive Order concerning war refugees, and expressing the President's hope that the United Nations will be disposed to cooperate in this connection. I am frank to say that I am not sanguine that Panama will take effective cooperative action.

The Embassy will of course do everything within its own power to make effective the policy of our Government.

Respectfully yours,


John Muccio
Charge d'Affaires a.i.

As usual -

SWR:mr

000229