

Cooperation with other Governments: Other Countries: Finland

000417

CROSS REFERENCE ON COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS-  
OTHER COUNTRIES (FINLAND)

FOR:

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

FOR MATERIAL RE ISSUANCE OF VISAS BY SWEDISH GOV. PERMITTING THE  
EVACUATION FROM FINLAND TO SWEDEN OF 100 THREATENED JEWISH REFUGEES  
FROM CENTRAL EUROPE

SEE: PROGRAMS WITH RESPECT TO RELIEF AND RESCUE OF REFUGEES: OTHER EVACUATION  
PROJECTS  
(EVACUATION OF REFUGEES FROM FINLAND)

ORIGINAL TEXT OF TELEGRAM SENT

FROM: Secretary of State, Washington  
TO: American Legation, Helsinki *Finland*  
DATED: May 4, 1944  
NUMBER: 104

War Refugee Board sends the following.

Refer your 344 of April 20. While granting the desirability of an official Finnish statement on victims of Nazi oppression and persecution War Refugee Board feels, and the Department agrees, that the political factors as reported by you may be considered to outweigh any advantages that might accrue through the issuance at this time of such a statement by the Finnish Government.

The Board would appreciate, however, your employing delaying tactics with the Foreign Office in the event that the statement might be considered opportune and of value at some later date.

With reference to movement from Finland to Sweden of various refugee groups and Finnish Jewish community listed your 308, April 3, Minister Johnson has just reported that Swedish Government does not believe that minority groups in Finland are in serious danger from the Germans but that refuge would probably be extended if Finnish Government requested Swedish Government to allow entry of these persons on ground that they may be in jeopardy in Finland.

Should circumstances so warrant, you are in your discretion authorized to approach appropriate officials of the Finnish Government in this connection. Please keep abreast of developments which may make desirable the movement from Finland of potential victims of the Gestapo in the event the Germans take action in Finland paralleling that taken by them in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, and keep the Department advised.

Foregoing repeated as Department's no. 629 to Stockholm.

HULL

cc: Miss Chauncey (for the Soc'y), Abrahamson, Akvin, Bernatsin, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lessor, Lufford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Penle, Pollak, Rains, Sargoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H.D. White, Files.

DECLASSIFIED

State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 14 1972

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Helsinki  
TO: The Secretary of State, Washington  
DATE: April 20, 1944  
NUMBER: 341

The following message is for the War Refugee Board.

Along the lines of my message number 303 dated April 3 I have had some further informal discussion regarding refugee questions and with reference to the intentions of the Board in respect to Finland, I would appreciate some guidance. It is my belief that the Government of Finland would issue a declaration of its willingness to facilitate the movement of refugees as envisaged in a telegram from the Department dated 7:30 p.m., February 29, paragraph 6. The political implications involved will, however, be overlooked by the Department. The Government of Finland may sooner or later link the welfare of its three hundred thousand Karelians who in all probability would leave the area to be ceded under current peace terms to Russia by Finland, or the one hundred and fifty thousand who are already in West Finland, with the general plan for the evacuation of the refugees. The Government of Finland is already in contact with the Government of the United States for the purpose of discussing the possibility of the Government of Finland issuing a declaration of the type in question for this purpose. However, the political implications have not been fully discussed.

As the Department knows, the Government of Finland on the other hand, on a basis of international cooperation at this time would be strongly attracted by any opportunity to associate itself with western democracies and would in all probability issue a declaration of the type in question for this purpose.

As my number 82 this is being repeated to Stockholm for Olsen.

The Swedish Community has advised me and the report is confirmed by the Swedish Legation, that the Government of Sweden has decided to allow entry of the 106 refugees which paragraph eight of my telegram in reference mentioned, into Sweden. It is indicated by the Assistant Chief of the Political Department of the Foreign Office that it might be opportune to make a statement in connection with the travel of these refugees, if a statement were forthcoming. It was asked by him whether any governments other than ours have made declarations up to the present time and he would like to know their contents if such declarations have been made.

DCR:MPL  
4/21/44

Miss Chauncey (for the Sec'y) Abrahamson, Akkin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Lufford, Mann, Mannon, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pehle, Pollak, Rains, Sargeoy, Smith, Standish, Stewart, Weinstein, H. D. White, Files

DECLASSIFIED  
GULLION State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 14 1972

100421

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM: The American Minister, Helsinki  
 TO: The Secretary of State, Washington  
 DATE: April 3, 1944  
 NUMBER: 303 (SECTION ONE)

The following message is for the War Refugee Board and refers to number 48 from the Department dated March 4, 1944. Department's airmails dated January 26 and February 29.

1. My initial approach to the refugee problem has been first finding and exploratory with a view to finding out, before formal representations are made, what the situation is and what cooperation may be expected since as far as Finland is concerned the implementation of the policies of the War Refugee Board presents special problems because of the presence of German troops in the country. Based on informal meetings with Foreign Office officials who are in contact with the Ministry of Social Affairs, officials of the Jewish Community and selected members of refugee groups, the following is a preliminary report.

2. The number of refugees in: 119 - German and Austrian, 18 - Polish; 2 - Lithuanian; about 5500 - Estonian; and 2 - Norwegian. The number of these refugees who can be considered as Jews is approximately 150. A separate report will be made with reference to the position of Estonian refugees since their situation is somewhat special. Although only a few are in combatant duties the number of Estonian refugees in the Finnish Army is about 2500 at present.

3. It is informally reported by the Minister of Social Affairs that of those citizens of German occupied countries who have been in Finland for some time, the majority and in many cases all of them would remain as "refugees" in Finland and that they would not be willing to return to their own countries in present circumstances. Excluding the numbers of refugees in two above, the following are totals of such persons by countries:

Austrian	2
Belgians	15
Czechs	13
Danes	475
Dutch	54
Estonian	1193
French	39
Greek	13
Hungarians	31

DECLASSIFIED  
 State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date SEP 14 1972

Italian	131
Lithuanian	1
Latvian	34
Letton	36
Luxembourg	1
Norwegian	192
Rumanian	2
Polish	144

311-100

SECRET  
1/1/43

DECLASSIFIED  
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72

By R. H. Parks Date ~~SEP 14~~ 1972

... all of these belong to the Jewish Community in the Jewish population of Finland. Names passports are possessed by 940 of these.

4. The treatment of refugees and Jews. At the present time it is not believed that there is any actual official discrimination against refugees or Jews. There is no classification of Jews as such in Finland and therefore no difference is said to be made on this basis among refugees. The sympathetic consideration shown by the present Government and authorities is satisfactory to the President of the Jewish Community.

There were instances of discrimination or abuse during the first enthusiasm of Finnish cooperation with Germany after 1941 and under the regime of a Maxiphile Chief of State Police who has now been replaced. There was at one time a segregation of Jewish refugees in camps called concentration camps by some of the Jews but considered by the Government to have been reception centers of a temporary nature. It is now said that the inhabitants have found work and that these have been dispersed. There seems to have been an attempt under the same Chief of Police, when the Rungell Government was in power, to deport some Jews to the continent. This attempt which I believe was reported in telegram from the Legation of that time, failed.

Refugees are eligible for benefits under the general poor law in the same way as other inhabitants of Finland although no special relief is available to these refugees.

0421

5. Regarding entry into the country, it is said that an alien does not have the usual visa and travel document, but desires to enter the country claiming asylum and offers good reasons, or if he would obviously be caused unfair hardships in case his admittance is refused, the question of not admitting him is sent to the Ministry for Social Affairs.

TRILBY

EGR:KPH  
4/6/44

Miss Chauncey (For the Sec'y), Abrahamson, Alesin, Bernstein, Cohn, DuBois, Friedman, Gaston, Hodel, Laughlin, Lesser, Lufford, Mann, Marks, McCormack, Paul, Pollak, Rains, Smith, Sargoy, Standish, Stewart, White, Fehle, Files, Hannon, Weinstein

1042