Provisions with Respect to Relief and Rescue of Refugees: Temporary Havens

Temporary Havens in Latin America
Red-Persecuted Poles Find Haven in Mexico

Refugees Start Colony After Flight From Enslavement by Stalin

By National Service.

LEON, Guanajuato, Mex., Nov. 4—Tens from their homes by Russian soldiery in 1940 and forced into virtual enslavement in Russia itself, 1,410 Polish refugees have found welcome, safety and health in a colony near here.

They owe their haven, reached after untold sufferings and many thousands of miles of wanderings to the sympathy of the Mexican government, particularly to President Avila Camacho and Minister of the Interior Miguel Abram, whose hearts were touched by the tragedy of these victims of Russian barbarity.

Hope to Return

An additional 2,500 refugees were scheduled to arrive during this month, the Mexican government having agreed to open its doors to a total of 20,000.

The nearly 1,500 here now are established on a former estate at Santa Rosa, halfway around the earth from the Red captors who nearly starved and worked them to death. Happily they are beginning to breathe the air of a free country, their only hope it is that some day they will be returned to the homeland they love so profoundly.

But—and this is the essence of their suffering—they were not always free men when they reached here. They were kept at the camp and they have a visible tinge of slavery rather than citizens of Poland.

For theirs is that part of Poland west of the Urals in 1939 as a result of the course of his shortlived cynical agreement with Hitler to divide up their ill-starred country. The Red marshal has made it abundantly clear that he does not intend to get out when the war ends. In fact, the deportation of these refugees—there were a million and one-half altogether, of whom one-half here since death was declared—by the Poles, they say, to make way for the people in favor of which they were not intended.
New York (N.Y.) Journal & American - November 5, 1944

Refugee Route... Above map shows how refugees traveled many thousands of miles from their homes in Poland until they reached safe haven in Mexico. Solid line follows travel to Siberia, broken line follows rest of their long and Odyssean. After severe hardships in Russia and Siberia they were sent to Karachi, India, and from there to Mexico. Their mother is still in the United States.

Own Tutors

The elders among the colonists were in charge of teaching. The school is under the direction of Prof. Felix Sobota, delegate of the Polish Ministry of Education, formerly of the Polish army, who instructed Polish troops in Scotland before coming here.

Prof. W. Kelso of Dartmouth College was sent by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to superintend the preparation of the camp for the arrival of the colonists. In charge of Basta Rosa is Bohdan Skrzydlo, delegate of the Polish Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare.

Praise Mexico

For a year and one-half, they went to Teheran, Iran, and Karachi, India. Then, because of jap-induced war, they were forced to sail westward by a roundabout way, instead of directly eastward, double back around Africa and thence south of Australia to reach their Mexican refuge, Basta Rosa.

Praise Mexico

To direct social welfare work, the Polish Legation in Mexico engaged Miss Ethel Defrigo, a Polish-speaking welfare worker of New York.

This colonists are loud in their praise of Mexico and her people. Their Mexican neighbors repeatedly demonstrate their sympathy and generosity.

But grateful as they are to the land that gave them refuge, all the colonists, old and young, rich and poor, aristocrat and peasant, dream of the future, hoping and praying that Poland will be restored to its historic inviolate, no inch of it. The dream of the greedy Reds.
PAWNS OF PERSECUTION... Leaders of Boy and Girl Scout troops in Poland, only in Mexico stand on summit of the Mount of Christ, the King, in the geographical center of the republic. These strong, young youths are helping their elders and the younger children, many orphans.
VICTIMS OF RED INHUMANITY . . . "They are all good and studious pupils," says the teacher of class of four and five-year-olds in Santa Rosa colony for Polish refugees in Guanajuato, Mexico.
FATHER JAGIEŁNICKI (left), who was flung into Russian prison after Soviet forces entered Poland in 1939, heads Boy Scouts in Santa Rosa colony. Fer-
vent patriotism burns in breasts of all refugees, who long to return to their homeland but fear Soviet Russia will swallow it up. Mexico has been very sympathetic to them.

Among the 300 children in the colony whose parents have died or have been separated from them, are the youngsters above. They are shown saying grace before dinner in Santa Anita, Cal., where they stayed several days prior to going on to camp in Mexico.
Jewish Refugees Seen Aiding Latin America

New York World-Telegram
OCT 26, 1944

Jewish refugees from Europe already have made important contributions to Latin America's economic and social life and can be expected to play an even more prominent role in the postwar era, Morris D. Waldman, vice chairman of the American Jewish Committee's executive committee, said today.

Reporting on a three-month tour that took him through Mexico, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Cuba, Mr. Waldman told a press conference that the United States, too, has profited from heavy immigration to Latin-America because the new population has created a higher standard of living and more markets for American exports.

In other respects, he added, post-Hitler immigrants have helped make those countries better the border more self-sufficient.

New Skills Brought In.

"They have brought in new merchandising ideas and goods," he explained. "Products of U.S. manufacture which previously had to be imported are now being manufactured by them."

Discussing the general effect of that immigration, Mr. Waldman said:

"There is a growing awareness that just as mass immigration to the United States in the past century was largely responsible for its colonial industrial, agricultural and commercial development, so these countries, particularly Brazil, Cuba and Mexico, have already seen gratifying evidence of the value of immigration in the industries developed by European refugees."

Adaptation Easy.

Mr. Waldman said that European refugees had shown a remarkable aptitude for adjusting themselves to Latin-American life.

"But because naturalized citizens in most of these countries are not given full citizenship rights, he added, the assimilation of newcomers has been somewhat retarded."

As for anti-Semitism toward the 860,000 Jews in Latin-America, Mr. Waldman said it was the result of Nazi propaganda, which until 1945 was allowed to go unchecked.

It is not, he emphasized, a product of the "inherent nature of the people themselves," and he concluded: "Because of the mixed nature of the population, it is not likely that the developing nationalism in any country will assume a racial character, such as developed in Nazi Germany."
Free Ports in Latin America
Refugees Accepted by Mexico, 3 Others

Temporary refugee havens, similar to the one at Oswego, N. Y., are being set up by Mexico, Ecuador, Venezuela and Paraguay, Morris D. Waldman, an official of the American Jewish Committee, said today. He has just returned from a three-month trip to Latin America.

Waldman said that he and Jacob Landau, director of the Overseas News Agency, traveling under sponsorship of the War Refugee Board, visited President Alfonso Camacho in Mexico and suggested the plan to him. Camacho agreed and cabled Mexican consuls in Switzerland to grant visas to 400 Jewish refugee families in Hungary.

The other three countries followed suit. Waldman said, while Brazil and Uruguay agreed to take 500 children each.

Latin Americans, he declared that Latin Americans are not anti-Semitic and said that what anti-Semitism there is has been artificially inflated by Nazi propagandists. He said that refugees recently admitted to Latin American countries have generally adjusted well to their new surroundings.

He said that "intelligent Latin
Mexico Haven For Refuge Jews
Mexico City, Aug. 2 (AP) — The Mexican Government today authorized establishment of a haven for refugees due to arrive soon.