Executive Office of the President

War Refugee Board

Projects and Documents

Volume One
WAR REFUGEE BOARD RECORDS

NOTE

The material contained herein is highly confidential in nature and is intended solely for use by members of the staff of the War Refugee Board in the performance of their duties. It should also be noted that documents marked "not paraphrased" must be paraphrased before being communicated to anyone other than a Government agency.
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WHEREAS it is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war;

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes of the United States, as President of the United States and as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, and in order to effectuate with all possible speed the rescue and relief of such victims of enemy oppression, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. There is established in the Executive Office of the President a War Refugee Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board). The Board shall consist of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Treasury. The Board may request the heads of other agencies or departments to participate in its deliberations whenever matters specially affecting such agencies or departments are under consideration.

2. The Board shall be charged with the responsibility for seeing that the policy of the Government, as stated in the preamble, is carried out. The functions of the Board shall include without limitation the development of plans and programs and the inauguration of effective measures for (a) the rescue, transportation, maintenance and relief of the victims of enemy oppression, and (b) the establishment of havens of temporary refuge for such victims. To this end the Board, through appropriate channels, shall take the necessary steps to enlist the cooperation of foreign governments and obtain their participation in the execution of such plans and programs.

3. It shall be the duty of the State, Treasury and War Departments, within their respective spheres, to execute at the request of (cont.)
the Board, the plans and programs so developed and the measures so
inaugurated. It shall be the duty of the heads of all agencies and
departments to supply or obtain for the Board such information and to
extend to the Board such supplies, shipping and other specified
assistance and facilities as the Board may require in carrying out the
provisions of this Order. The State Department shall appoint special
attaches with diplomatic status, on the recommendation of the Board,
to be stationed abroad in places where it is likely that assistance
can be rendered to war refugees, the duties and responsibilities of
such attaches to be defined by the Board in consultation with the
State Department.

4. The Board and the State, Treasury and War Departments are
authorized to accept the services or contributions of any private
persons, private organizations, State agencies, or agencies of foreign
governments in carrying out the purposes of this Order. The Board
shall cooperate with all existing and future international organiza-
tions concerned with the problems of refugee rescue, maintenance,
transportation, relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement.

5. To the extent possible the Board shall utilize the personnel,
supplies, facilities and services of the State, Treasury and War Depar-
tments. In addition the Board, within the limits of funds which may be
made available, may employ necessary personnel without regard for the
Civil Service laws and regulations and the Classification Act of 1923,
as amended, and make provisions for supplies, facilities and services
necessary to discharge its responsibilities. The Board shall appoint
an Executive Director who shall serve as its principal executive
officer. It shall be the duty of the Executive Director to arrange
for the prompt execution of the plans and programs developed and the
measures inaugurated by the Board, to supervise the activities of the
special attaches and to submit frequent reports to the Board on the
steps taken for the rescue and relief of war refugees.

6. The Board shall be directly responsible to the President in
carrying out the policy of this Government, as stated in the Preamble,
and the Board shall report to him at frequent intervals concerning the
steps taken for the rescue and relief of war refugees and shall make
such recommendations as the Board may deem appropriate for further
action to overcome any difficulties encountered in the rescue and
relief of war refugees.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE;
January 22, 1944.
The President today, by Executive Order, set up a War Refugee Board consisting of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of War, to take action for the immediate rescue from the Nazis of as many as possible of the persecuted minorities of Europe—racial, religious or political—all civilians victims of war savagery.

The Executive Order declares that "it is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war."

The Board, in charged with direct responsibility to the President in seeing that the announced policy is carried out. The President indicated that while he would look directly to the Board for the successful execution of this policy, the Board, of course, would cooperate fully with the Intergovernmental Committee, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and other interested international organizations.

The President stated that he expected to obtain the cooperation of all members of the United Nations and other foreign governments in carrying out this difficult but important task. He stated that the existing facilities of the State, Treasury and War Departments would be employed to aid Axis victims to the fullest extent possible. He stressed that it was urgent that action be taken at once to forestall the plan of the Nazis to exterminate all the Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe.

It will be the duty of a full-time Executive Director of the Board to arrange for the prompt execution of the plans and program developed and the measures inaugurated by the Board.
II. POLICY MATTERS

A. RESCUE OF INDIVIDUALS

B. THE BLOCKADE

C. CLEARANCE OF CERTAIN LICENSING WITH THE BRITISH

D. BOARD POSITION ON THE PALESTINE ISSUE

E. FOOD AND CLOTHING STOCKPILLES IN NEUTRAL COUNTRIES
POLICY MATTERS: RESCUE OF INDIVIDUALS

In Press Release No. 3 dated February 9, 1944, the Board announced that it will confine its attention to "projects involving the relief or rescue of groups of persons...it will not be able to deal with proposals limited to seeking out and rescuing any individual." Persons urging the rescue of individuals are being referred to private organizations here.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H.  Date SEP 28 1972
In a communication to London relative to certain discussions between Dr. Nahum Goldmann of the World Jewish Congress and Ambassador Winant, the Board indicated that it had made no decision to approach the blockade authorities concerning the shipment of supplies from the countries of Europe and the relief of the Jews and other persecuted people of Europe. (Cable No. 2033 to London dated March 17; see also Cable No. 2541 from London dated February 24.)

For an account of British and American assurances given Switzerland, prior to the creation of the Board, with respect to the transshipment of foodstuffs and textiles to relieve the burden placed upon the Swiss economy by the large number of refugees who have made their way to that country, see IV D - 3, Cooperation with Switzerland.

Upon the Board's recommendation, clearance from the London Blockade Committee was obtained with respect to two proposals on the part of the American Friends Service Committee involving the purchase in neutral countries of foodstuffs to be dispatched for the relief of particularly needy displaced persons and refugees in France. This clearance, to which the Foreign Economic Administration also lent its support, was based on the condition that the proposed purchases in Portugal and Spain be subject to the usual controls as to kinds of goods procured and firms or intermediaries dealt with, and on condition that the proposed exports from Switzerland comply with current instructions to the U.S. Legation at Bern. Appropriate licenses are to be issued permitting the transfer of $25,000 to the American Friends' representative at Lisbon and $25,000 to their representative in Switzerland. Distribution of the foodstuffs purchased is to be handled by an associate organization in France under International Red Cross supervision. (See Cable No. 4227, dated May 25.)

Early in June Ambassador Winant reported from London that the British, in response to approaches made by Winant at the Board's instigation, are now prepared to instruct their representatives in Turkey, Spain, and Portugal to join with Board representatives in giving assurances that if a more generous policy toward receiving and caring for refugees is adopted by these countries, the provision of additional supplies will be arranged to meet the needs of such new refugees. It was pointed out that the word "provision" is preferred by the British in place of the word "shipment" since it was felt that the general shipping situation might make it impossible to send supplies by means of Allied ships. (Cable No. 4560 from London dated June 7; see also Cable No. 3953 to London dated May 18.)

See also IV E, Food and Clothing Stockpiles in Neutral Countries.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter 3-11-73
By R. H. Parks Date SEP 26 1972

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In a letter dated March 4 and addressed to the Board from the State Department it was indicated that concern had been expressed by the British over the financial aspects of the recent licensing of purchases by the International Red Cross in enemy territory. State urgently requested that proposed future transactions be cleared in their "economic warfare aspects" with the Foreign Economic Administration and the British. In a reply to the State Department dated March 16, the Board indicated that operations in this field have been in accordance with this Government's policy, which has been established for some time; that although the Board intends to keep the British informed of what it does and, of course, intends to consider any objections they may have, it does not contemplate clearing its programs with them, especially since that has not been its procedure in this field in the past. An informal conference was subsequently held between Board representatives and Mr. Thorold of the British Embassy affirming the Board's position. (See IV C - 1 a, Cooperation with Great Britain, especially attachements 4, 5, 6, and 7 thereto.)

In April in a communication from the U. S. Embassy in London there was transmitted a copy of a letter from Lord Drogheda of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare on the matter of financing refugee operations in enemy territory. Reiterating the fear that funds transmitted under certain Treasury licenses for evacuation operations might be of benefit to the enemy, the letter again stressed the British view as to the undesirability of granting, without prior consultation with the British, licenses on terms cutting across "agreed blockade policy."

In the opinion of the British, the raising of funds in enemy territory by means of loans from persons in those areas against guarantees of post-war repayment is far superior to the actual use of dollars or Swiss francs in occupied countries (Dispatch No. 15,061 from London dated April 17).

In May the Board was furnished with a copy of a letter addressed to the U. S. Embassy in London by the British Ministry of Economic Warfare, asking confirmation of M.E.W.'s understanding that under the terms of Treasury licenses covering refugee rescue and relief operations, the Board is authorizing the expenditure of hard currencies in occupied countries only when it is "strictly necessary to secure assistance in effecting actual rescues, and that it is not authorized for the purchase of relief supplies in enemy territory." M.E.W. indicated that it would appreciate

(cont.)
In the course of discussion with the British in June, certain information was requested with respect to Treasury licenses authorizing refugee rescue and relief operations in enemy territory. The Board advised Mr. Thorold of the British Embassy that, as of June 1, the total amount authorized by the Treasury for such operations is $4,088,100. (Although this is the total amount authorized to be remitted to neutral countries, the amount actually sent is considerably less.)

With respect to the third method of financing permitted by the licenses under question—the use of free currency in enemy territory—only a very small fraction of the total amount authorized has been used in this manner, according to reports presently available. (See letter from the Board to the British Embassy dated June 29, comprising attachment \#1.) Cables were sent to the U.S. Missions concerned requesting reports on the total amount, if any, of free currency actually sent into enemy territory under such licenses. (See Cable No. 2021 to Bern, Cable No. 1887 to Lisbon, Cable No. 1319 to Stockholm, and Cable No. 595 to Ankara, all dated July 1.)

For an account of a scheme proposed to the Board by the British to supplement financing of rescue and relief projects, see VII A, Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Committee.
LETTER TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY FROM THE BOARD
June 29, 1944

Dear Mr. Thorold,

You will recall that during our recent meeting with you and Mr. Dingle Foot, Mr. Foot requested certain information with respect to U.S. Treasury licenses authorizing rescue and relief operations in enemy territory.

I have not been advised by the Treasury Department that as of June 1, 1944, the total amount authorized for such operations is $2,000,000. It should be borne in mind that this is the total amount authorized to be remitted to neutral countries and that the actual amount sent is considerably less.

As to the use of free currency in enemy territory (the third method of financing permitted by the licenses under question), it appears, from reports presently available, that only a very small fraction of the aforementioned total has been used in this manner. In this connection I should like to advise you that cables are now being sent to the American missions concerned requesting reports on the total amount, if any, of free currency sent into enemy territory under such licenses. As soon as these reports are received, I shall advise you further.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) J.W. Pehle
J. W. Pehle
Executive Director

Mr. Guy F. Thorold
Counselor, British Embassy
Washington, D.C.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-73
By M. H. Parks Date SEP 28, 1972
POLICY MATTERS: BOARD POSITION ON THE PALESTINE ISSUE

In a memorandum of March 10 prepared by the Board for Mr. Stettinius in connection with his trip to London, the following statement was made: "The War Refugee Board has not taken and has no intention of taking a position supporting the establishment of a Jewish national state in Palestine.

"The Board's sole interest in Palestine lies simply in the question as to what extent Jewish refugees can be brought into Palestine, even if only on a temporary basis.

"From the standpoint, with which we are concerned, of saving the Jews in Europe from death, bringing them into Palestine and placing them in camps, to be returned to their homelands at the end of the war, is just as effective as admitting them to Palestine on a permanent basis.

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By H. H. Forbush Date SEP 28 1972
Although it had been proposed on several occasions in the past that foodstuffs and clothing in package form be shipped to the International Red Cross for distribution to unassimilated groups in enemy territory, such proposals had previously been rejected, primarily because adequate assurances were lacking that the relief provided would go to the intended beneficiaries and not to the enemy.

Because of the alarming scarcity of food and clothing in neutral markets, the International Red Cross again urged that the Board create stockpiles of food and clothing parcels to be held in Geneva and at other neutral locations for distribution exclusively to unassimilated groups in camps. In transmitting this request, Minister Harrison strongly recommended favorable action.

After due consideration of the matter in the light of International Red Cross assurances and changing world events, the Board decided to press for the creation of such stockpiles. As a result of persistent efforts, the agreement of the British was finally obtained to the transblockade shipments of urgently needed relief destined for civilians in internment camps in enemy Europe. Following discussions between Executive Director Pehle, Dingle M. Foot, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare, and representatives of both the State Department and the Foreign Economic Administration, an agreement was reached with the British to permit the shipment of 100,000 food parcels per month for a period of three months, for distribution by the International Red Cross to persons in Nazi internment camps.

In addition, and at the Board's suggestion, it was also agreed that 25,000 clothing parcels would be prepared for later distribution to those same people when certain information has been obtained from the International Red Cross on the clothing situation in the camps.

Assurances will be required from the International Red Cross as to distribution to intended beneficiaries and as to adequate supervision to insure no benefit to the enemy, and reports are to be made on the delivery of all consignments.

A memorandum to this effect was drawn up following recent conferences between British and U. S. officials, and was signed by representatives of (cont.)
both Governments. Efforts are being made to get this program under way at once, now that the basic blockade decision has been made.

While the British had proposed that this program be limited to detained persons in what was formerly unoccupied France, at the Board's insistence it was agreed that the proposed measure would not be so limited and that it would apply to any internment camps in Europe selected by the International Red Cross. This three months' program is admittedly experimental. If successful, it is contemplated that this system of relief will be considerably expanded.

See also II B, The Blockade, and V D - 2, Approaches to the Germans.
III. REPRESENTATIVES AND SPECIAL ATTACHES

A. APPOINTMENTS

B. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 11/1/73
By R. H. Forrest Date SEP 28, 1973
Representatives and Special Attachés: Appointments

Great Britain

Dorothy K. Brown (Mrs. La Rue Brown) was named assistant to the Board’s Special Representative in Great Britain. The Board’s Special Representative for that country is yet to be named. (See Cable No. 4109 to London dated April 18.)

Russia

In a communication to Moscow the Board indicated to Ambassador Harriman that, subject to his approval, it proposed to name Robert J. Scovell, former representative of the American Red Cross in Russia, and now on the headquarters staff of that organization, as Special Representative of the Board in the Soviet Union with the designation as Special Attaché to the Embassy on war refugee matters (Cable No. 976 to Moscow dated April 20). Harriman replied that in his opinion it would be definitely inadvisable that such a representative be sent to Russia. Matters of this sort, he pointed out, must be handled with high officials of the Soviet Government who do not receive attaches or junior officers of the Embassy. It was also suggested that such a representative would not be permitted to travel about the country or to develop direct contacts with various agencies of the government. In the event of any substantial increase in the volume of war refugee work in Russia, however, Harriman indicated that he would wish to review the situation and at that time express his views as to the type of representative required for the work involved (Cable No. 1417 from Moscow dated April 22).

Spain

David Blickenstaff, representative of the American Friends Service Committee in Madrid, was tentatively designated as the Board’s Special Representative in Spain (Cable No. 530 to Madrid dated February 25). Ambassador Hayes in turn inquired as to whether, in the event of Blickenstaff’s designation as the Board’s representative, Blickenstaff would be expected to give up his present work as director of American relief organizations in Spain. Hayes indicated that the latter job is now being handled by Blickenstaff with unusual competence, but intimated that it could not be continued so effectively if Blickenstaff were given such additional responsibilities as the Board’s assignment would entail (Cable No. 478 from Madrid dated March 9).

(cont.)
In lieu of Blickonstaff, the Board proposed the appointment of James Saxon, an employee of the Treasury Department stationed in French North Africa (Cable No. 726 to Madrid dated March 16). In reply, Hayes strongly recommended that Blickonstaff be designated as the Board's Representative if, in the light of Hayes' other comments and suggestions, the Board still felt it necessary to have a representative in Spain (Cable No. 974 from Madrid dated March 20). For a more detailed account of this matter see IV B - 1, Cooperation with Spain.

As a result of Hayes' refusal to deliver a Treasury license issued to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee covering certain evacuation operations to be carried out through Spain, and in the absence of any reports from Hayes outlining more cooperative action in other connections, the Board proposed to send a representative to Spain in order to review with Hayes the situation there (Cable No. 1222 to Madrid dated May 19; see also Cable No. 1777 from Madrid dated May 22). Although the services of James G. McDonald were originally enlisted for this mission, it later developed that, at least for the time being, McDonald would not undertake the trip proposed. Meanwhile James Mann, Assistant Executive Director of the Board, went to Spain in connection with his special mission in Portugal. (See Cable No. 1810 to Madrid dated June 24.)

For a detailed exposition of difficulties in Spain see VI B, Evacuations to and through Spain and Portugal, and VI B - 2, Evacuation of Children from France to Spain and Portugal (JDC).

Turkey

Ira Hirschmann was named Special Representative of the Board in Turkey and Special Attaché on war refugee matters to the U.S. Embassy there (Cable No. 120 to Ankara dated February 12; see attachment E1). Hirschmann actually reached Turkey from the United States early in February, returning to this Country in April.

Hirschmann returned to Turkey in June. Herbert Katzki was sent to Ankara to serve as Hirschmann's Administrative Assistant.

For a detailed account of Hirschmann's activities and accomplishments while in Turkey see IV D - 2, Cooperation with Turkey, and VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey, particularly the account in the latter of the manner in which activities in Turkey on behalf of Jewish refugees are now to be centralized under the Board's representative there.

(cont.)
Switzerland

Roswell McClelland, representative of the American Friends Service Committee, was named Special Representative of the Board for Switzerland and Special Attaché to the Legation on war refugee matters. Instructions similar to those dispatched for Hirschmann (see attachment #1) were sent McClelland (Cable No. 659 to Bern dated February 26).

For further details concerning McClelland's activities see IV D - 3, Cooperation with Switzerland, and VI D, Evacuations to and through Switzerland.

Portugal

Dr. Robert C. Dexter, European representative of the Unitarian Service Committee, was named Special Representative of the Board in Portugal and Special Attaché to the U. S. Legation on war refugee matters (Cable No. 949 to Lisbon dated April 4). Instructions similar to those sent Hirschmann (see attachment #1) were embodied in this cable.

In view of reports received from Portugal indicating that there may be a conflict between the operations of the World Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in their efforts to rescue child refugees from enemy territory, James H. Mann, Assistant Executive Director of the Board, was sent to Lisbon for a short visit of inspection, to confer with Board Representative Dexter and with representatives of both the WJC and JDC.

For further details concerning the situation in Portugal, as well as with respect to Dexter's activities there, see IV D - 4, Cooperation with Portugal, and VI B, Evacuations to and through Spain and Portugal.

Sweden

Iver Olsen, Treasury Representative in Stockholm and Financial Attaché to the U. S. Legation there, was named Special Representative of the Board in Sweden (Cable No. 527 to Stockholm dated March 28). Instructions similar to those sent Hirschmann (see attachment #1) were contained in this cable.

Further details with respect to Olsen's activities are to be found in IV D - 5, Cooperation with Sweden, and VI F - 9, Evacuations to and through Sweden.

(cont.)
North Africa

Leonard Ackerman, Treasury Representative in North Africa, was originally named Special Representative of the Board in that area. Instructions similar to those dispatched for Hirschmann (see attachment #2) were sent Ackerman (Cable No. 512 to Algiers dated February 22).

In a subsequent cable from the Board Ackerman was redesignated Special Representative for the Board in the Mediterranean area and now deals with refugee problems in North Africa and Italy, as well as Corsica, Sardinia, Yugoslavia, and similar areas. Pending settlement of the question of Board representation in Spain, James Saxon was also designated, as a Special Representative of the Board, to assist Ackerman in the Mediterranean area (Cable No. 1086 to Algiers dated April 12).

Permission was subsequently granted by the Supreme Allied Commander of the Mediterranean Theatre for the appointment, for territories adjacent to Italy, of a Special Representative to be attached to headquarters of the Allied Control Commission. It is proposed that Ackerman serve in this capacity, subject to ACC approval.

In addition to Ackerman's attachment to the U. S. Mission in Algiers, he is also attached to Robert Murphy in the latter's current capacity as Political Adviser to the Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean Theatre (Cable No. 1528 to Algiers dated May 18).

For further details with respect to Ackerman's activities and accomplishments see the following: IV C - 7, French North Africa; IV C - 7, Yugoslavia; IV F - 7, Italy; VI F - 3, Evacuations from Spain to Icy Bay; VI E - 1, Evacuations of Refugees from the Island of Rob; VI E - 7, Evacuations to and through Italy; and VI C - 2, Temporary Havens in the United States.
The provides Special Attachés with diplomatic status, as the President's order of January 22, the Board proposes to appoint Mr. Hirschmann, who is now in Turkey in a private capacity, as the Acting Special Representative of the Board with the designation by the Department of Special Attachés to the Embassy on war refugee matters. The President's order provides that the State Department shall appoint such Special Attachés on the recommendation of the Board, that they shall have diplomatic status, and that their duties and responsibilities shall be defined by the Board in consultation with the Department.

If this meets with your approval, you should immediately advise Hirschmann that he is so designated and that he is to have diplomatic status. It is assumed that there will be no objection on the part of the Turkish Government to this designation, although you may in your discretion approach the Turkish authorities informally if you consider it necessary or advisable to do so. You are requested to confirm by telegram Hirschmann's designation or to advise us promptly if there is any reason why the designation should not be effective at once.

You should advise Hirschmann that:

(a) He is charged with the duty and responsibility of carrying out the Board's policies and programs in Turkey;

(b) He is responsible to the Ambassador and should discuss his activities and problems with him regularly and fully;

(c) The Embassy will provide him with the necessary communications facilities in carrying on his official duties;

(d) He shall extend all possible assistance to the Ambassador in carrying out the instructions contained in the Department's reference telegram;

 (...)
(e) He shall work with and give all possible assistance to public and private agencies operating in Turkey in this field regardless of whether such organizations are American, foreign or international;

(f) He shall develop and assist in the development of programs and implementation of measures for the rescue, transportation, maintenance and relief of refugees;

(g) He shall forward to the Board recommendations and frequent reports on progress of work and difficulties encountered;

(h) As far as the Trading with the Enemy Act is concerned, the Secretary of the Treasury has vested in the War Refugees Board and its representatives in the field full authority to communicate with enemy territory to carry out the purposes of the Order. The Secretary of the Treasury has also delegated to the War Refugees Board and its representatives the power to authorize any public or private agencies who may be subject to the provisions of our Trading with the Enemy Act, to communicate with enemy territory for the purpose of carrying out the Order. Hirschmann is authorized to act accordingly.

After receipt of confirmation of approval of Hirschmann's designation further detailed instruction will follow from time to time, including instructions concerning fiscal and administrative matters.

STEPHANUS

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-12
By H. H. Parks Decr. SEP 28, 1972

200474
See instructions to Hirschman contained in Cable No. 120 dated February 12, which appears as attachment #1 to III A. Appointment of Special Representative. Similar instructions have been dispatched to the other representatives designated.
IV. COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS

A. HISTORICAL SUMMARY

B. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO U. S. MISSIONS

C. UNITED NATIONS (OTHER THAN LATIN AMERICAN)

D. NEUTRAL EUROPEAN

1. SPAIN
2. TURKEY
3. SWITZERLAND
4. PORTUGAL
5. SWEDEN
6. IRELAND

E. LATIN AMERICAN

1. BOLIVIA
2. CUBA

(cont.)
3. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
4. ECUADOR
5. EL SALVADOR
6. HAITI
7. HONDURAS
8. MEXICO
9. NICARAGUA
10. PANAMA
11. PARAGUAY
12. PERU
13. URUGUAY
14. VENEZUELA
15. BRAZIL
16. GUATEMALA
17. CHILE
18. COLOMBIA
19. COSTA RICA
20. ARGENTINA

P. OTHER COUNTRIES
1. EGYPT
2. ICELAND
3. SAUDI-ARABIA
4. TANZANIA
5. ITALY
6. FINLAND
7. AFGHANISTAN
COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: HISTORICAL SUMMARY

In March 1938, in a communication addressed to various governments by the President of the United States, inquiry was made as to whether such governments would be willing to join the United States in setting up an intergovernmental organization which would seek to introduce order into the forced migration of political and religious refugees from Central Europe.

In response to this inquiry, representatives of 33 governments met at Evanston, Illinois, in July of 1938, the United States being represented by Myron C. Taylor assisted by Robert Field and George Braunt of the State Department. As an outgrowth of this Evanston Conference, the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees was established, with George Rublee as director. In February 1939 Rublee was succeeded by Sir Herbert Readman.

The Committee established headquarters in London. Lord Kinterson, a member of the British Cabinet, was made chairman; and four vice-chairmen representing France, Brazil, the Netherlands, and the United States, together with the chairman, constitute the executive committee. In February 1939 a representative of the Argentine Government was added to the committee. Myron C. Taylor was named the U.S. representative (with Ambassador Winant as alternate) and continues in this capacity at the present time.

During the first year of its existence, IGC was chiefly concerned with efforts to negotiate with the Germans in order to work out a good plan of migration for those who, because of their race, religion, or political beliefs, were being oppressed by the Nazis. Before any major accomplishments were achieved, however, the war broke out and the activities of the Committee were necessarily limited by conditions which the war imposed. Activities thereafter largely consisted of negotiation for places of resettlement under a 3- to 5-year program with various governments, including those of the Dominican Republic, the Philippine Commonwealth, British Guiana, and Northern Rhodesia.

United Nations Declaration

A declaration issued in December 1942 by the United Nations (see attachment #1) "condemned in the strongest possible terms" the bestial
policy of cold-blooded extermination of the Jewish race. This declaration further reaffirmed the solemn resolution of the United Nations "to ensure that those responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution, and to press on with the necessary practical measures to this end."

Bermuda Conference

During the early part of 1943 the British and American Governments decided to call a meeting to examine in the light of existing circumstances all possible methods of relieving the distress of those in Europe who were victims of Nazi aggression. This resulted in the convening of a conference in Bermuda in April 1943. Recommendations resulting from the Bermuda Conference are contained in a joint report made by the delegates.

Since the meeting in Bermuda, the mandate of the Committee as defined in July 1938 has been extended. At a meeting of the Executive Committee on August 4, 1938, the following mandate was adopted: "The Intergovernmental Committee shall extend its mandate so as to include, as may be found necessary and practicable, in addition to those already within the mandate, those persons, wherever they may be, who as a result of events in Europe have had to leave, or may have to leave, their countries of residence because of the danger to their lives or liberties on account of their race, religion or political beliefs.

"With regard to persons coming within the mandate as extended the Executive Committee be empowered by the member states to undertake negotiations with neutral or allied states or with organizations, and, to take such steps as may be necessary to preserve, maintain and transport them. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to receive and disburse for the purposes enumerated above, funds both public and private."

The membership of the ICC has also been increased. Thirty-five governments are now members (see attachment 2), and fourteen others hold invitations to join.

The management/staff of the ICC includes the Director, Sir Herbert Emerson, and a Vice-Director, Mr. Patrick Malin of the United States.
COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO U.S. MISSIONS

On January 25 a circular cable (see attachment #2) was dispatched by the State Department to U.S. Missions in Britain (Cable No. 634), Portugal (Cable No. 200), Spain (Cable No. 207), Sweden (Cable No. 131), Switzerland (Cable No. 251), and Turkey (Cable No. 68), advising them of the creation of the Board and requesting their assistance in effectuating the rescue policy set forth in the Board's Executive Order. This cable was repeated to all other U.S. Missions.

A follow-up circular airmail to all U.S. Missions except London, Ciudad Trujillo, San Salvador, Port-au-Prince, Tegucigalpa, La Paz, and Buenos Aires was dispatched by the State Department on February 29 (see attachment #2).
The attention of the Belgian, Czechoslovak, Greek, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norwegian, Polish, Soviet, United Kingdom, United States, and Yugoslav Governments and also of the French National Committee has been drawn to numerous reports from Europe that the German authorities, out of contempt for freedom-loving peoples, are carrying into effect Hitler's oft-repeated intention to exterminate the Jewish people in Europe.

From all the occupied countries Jews are being transported in conditions of appalling horror and brutality to Eastern Europe. In Poland, which has been made the principal Nazi slaughterhouse, the ghettos established by the German invader are being systematically emptied of all Jews except a few highly skilled workers required for war industries. None of those taken away are ever heard of again. The able-bodied are slowly worked to death in labor camps. The infirm are left to die of exposure and starvation or are deliberately massacred in mass executions. The number of victims of these bloody cruelties is reckoned in hundreds of thousands of entirely innocent men, women and children.

The above-mentioned governments and the French National Committee condemn in the strongest possible terms this bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination. They declare that such events can only strengthen the resolve of all freedom-loving peoples to overthrow the barbarous Hitlerite tyranny. They reaffirm their solemn resolution to assure that those responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution, and to press on with the necessary practical measures to this end.
**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON REFUGEES**

**Member Governments (as of August 4, 1943)**
- United States
- Argentina
- Australia
- Belgium
- Bolivia
- United Kingdom
- Brazil
- Canada
- Chile
- Colombia
- Cuba
- Denmark
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- France
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Ireland
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Norway
- New Zealand
- Paraguay
- Netherlands
- Peru
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

**Governments Invited To Join following Meeting of 1943 Executive Committee August 4, 1943**
- South Africa*
- Czechoslovakia*
- Egypt*
- Ethiopia
- Greece
- Iceland
- India
- Iran
- Iraq
- Luxembourg*
- Poland*
- Portugal
- Salvador
- Spain
- Turkey
- U.S.S.R.*
- Yugoslavia

**Former Members Invited To Rejoin following August 4, 1943 Meeting**
- Costa Rica
- Guatemala
- Panama

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DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By R. H. Fuss Date **SEP 28, 1972**
THE PRESIDENT has instructed the Secretaries of State, Treasury, and War, to make action for the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution. In an executive order issued January 22, the President declared: "It is the policy of this Government to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war." The order establishes a special governmental machinery for executing this policy. It creates a Far Refugee Board, consisting of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and War. The Board is charged with direct responsibility to the President in seeing that the announced policy is carried out. The President indicated that while he would look directly to the Board for the execution of this policy, the Board would cooperate with the Intergovernmental Committee, UNRRA, and other interested international organizations. The President stated that he expected the cooperation of all members of the United Nations and other governments in carrying out this difficult but important task. He stated that the existing facilities of the State, Treasury and War Departments would be employed to furnish aid to Axis victims to the fullest extent possible. He stressed that it was urgent that action be taken to forestall the plot of the Axis to exterminate the Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe.

You should do everything possible to effectuate this policy of this Government, bearing in mind that time is of the essence. You should cooperate closely with all public and established private agencies who are active in your area in this field, aiding them in the development of coordinated programs and in the effectuation of integrated measures for the rescue, transportation, maintenance and relief of victims of enemy oppression, etc.

(COIN'T)
The communication facilities should be made freely available to these private agencies for all appropriate messages for carrying out the policy of this Government herein stated, keeping the War Refugee Board advised through the Department. You should give them every assistance in obtaining and verifying information.

You are requested to render an immediate report concerning the actual situation as it exists today in the country to which you are accredited. This report should include a full statement as to what is being done to rescue the Jews and other persecuted minorities from Hitler, including particularly (a) the extent to which these war refugees are permitted to enter the country to which you are accredited, (b) the extent to which such country actually encourages and cooperates in their entry, and (c) the extent to which such refugees are not able to enter such country because of the failure of such country to cooperate in their entry. This report should cover actual cases which have come to your attention involving refugees being turned back at the border and the reasons why such refugees were turned back. You should also report periodically on cases of this character which come to your attention in the future.

You should include in your report your recommendations as to what you feel the Government can do to effectuate with all possible speed the rescue and relief of the victims of enemy oppression, including particularly what can be done to make the government of the country to which you are accredited cooperate more fully in carrying out this policy. Your report should cover any special obstacles which you feel are interfering with the rescue and relief of these victims and your recommendations as to what can be done to remove these obstacles.

You are requested to approach the Government to which you are accredited, explain the policy expressed in the President's Executive Order referred to above, and ascertain from such Government the extent to which it is prepared to cooperate.

Diplomatic and consular officers are instructed to do everything possible to carry out the policy expressed in the President's Executive Order. This cablegram has been transmitted by telegram or airgram to all diplomatic and consular officers.

Repeat to consular offices under your jurisdiction.

HULL
The following airgram is sent at the request of the President's War Refugee Board:

Refer to Department's cable of January 25 concerning the President's Executive Order establishing the War Refugee Board and declaring the policy of this Government.

In discussing this matter with the Foreign Office of the government to which you are accredited, you are requested to make it clear that the establishment of the War Refugee Board represents this Government's determination effectively to carry out without delay the policy to take all possible measures for the speedy rescue and relief of the refugees of Europe.

Although this Government on its part intends to take all possible action with all possible speed, we feel certain that this effort will not be unilateral and we wish to make it clear that it continues to be the policy of this Government to encourage and participate in effective cooperative efforts with other governments.

As the President has stated, the Board of course will cooperate fully with all interested international organizations.

You are requested to make clear to the government to which you are accredited the position of this Government and our desire for its cooperative action. You should explore with the appropriate officials of the Foreign Office the possibility of implementing such cooperation through the issuance by their Government of a declaration of policy similar to that made by the President and the issuance by the Foreign Office of instructions to its representatives in other countries comparable to the instructions contained in the Department's telegram of January 25.

Please keep us informed on this matter.

STETTINIUS

DECLASSIFIED
State Dep't Letter 1-11-73
By R. A. Parks Date SEP 28 1972