

Projects AND Documents, Volume I
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Coop. Switzerland

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: NEUTRAL EUROPEAN

SWITZERLAND

Shortly after the Board was set up, a preliminary report was received from Minister Harrison in Bern concerning the refugee situation in Switzerland and the willingness of the Swiss federal authorities to be of help on this problem. More than 70,000 refugees had already been admitted to Switzerland, it was reported, and more were arriving at the rate of 90 to 100 a night. Harrison advised that Switzerland's policy is to admit, so far as circumstances permit, political refugees, sick people, pregnant women, aged persons with their wives or husbands, infants and very young children, persons with close relatives in Switzerland, and women who have lost Swiss nationality through marriage. The Swiss take the position that they cannot associate themselves formally with the Board's program since it is that of a belligerent government, but that they will continue to contribute as substantial aid as possible in specific cases, acting independently (Cable No. 941 from Bern dated February 15; see attachment #1).

In another report from Harrison it was indicated that the Swiss Department of Justice and Police had formed a consulting committee of Swiss citizens interested in refugee problems, which will advise the Swiss Government on proposals from various sources concerning refugee matters (Cable No. 1130 from Bern dated February 24).

A report somewhat in conflict with those made by Harrison was received from the representative in Switzerland of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis. According to UOR representatives, the Swiss Government grants asylum only to elderly men, women with minor children, and those who have relatives in Switzerland. Younger men endeavoring to escape deportation to Poland from Belgium, France, and Holland and who make their way to the Swiss frontier, are reportedly prohibited entry. UOR representatives stress the importance of an appeal to the Swiss Government to admit persecuted Jews and political refugees (Cable No. 1321 from Bern dated March 4; see also VI.E - 2, Transfer of Jews from Poland to Hungary, etc.).

Other communications from Harrison summarize a report from the Swiss Government on the refugee problem in that country (Cable No. 1304

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from Bern dated March 4, comprising attachment #2; and Cable No. 1303 from Bern of the same date).

Later in March Harrison's attention was redirected to the apparent inconsistencies between the official statement of Swiss Government policy forwarded by Harrison and actual practice reported at Swiss frontiers. Since the question appeared to be the interpretation Swiss authorities place on the term "political refugees," the Board asked Harrison to approach appropriate officials of the Swiss Government with the view to ascertaining the extent to which Swiss authorities -- including the Swiss Foreign Policy Department, border guards, and cantonal police -- consider the following to be political refugees: stateless Jews, Jewish nationals of United Nations now occupied by the Germans, Jewish nationals of Germany and her satellites, and nationals generally of United Nations now occupied by the Germans. At the same time the Board asked Harrison to make clear to the Swiss Government the Board's belief that persons in all four of these categories should be considered political refugees and should, after appropriate security checks, be afforded temporary refuge without regard to age, sex, or the existence of close relatives in Switzerland (Cable No. 983 to Bern dated March 24).

In line with the Board's policy of bringing pressure to bear on satellite governments to desist from abetting persecutions, a request was dispatched to Harrison as well as to other U.S. Missions, asking that certain information be relayed through such channels as were available to the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary (see V B - 1, Approaches to the Satellites, and Cable No. 770 to Bern dated March 7, comprising attachment #2 thereto).

One of the most important problems relative to refugees in Switzerland is that of providing food and clothing. In a communication from the State Department to Minister Harrison at Bern before the creation of the Board, there was transmitted the text of a note to the Swiss Foreign Office on the matter of British and U.S. cooperation in easing the economic burden on Switzerland occasioned by the large number of refugees who have made their way to that country (Cable No. 190 to Bern dated January 20; see attachment #3). The Swiss Government was assured that Britain and the United States would give as favorable consideration as circumstances permit to requests for the purchase and extraordinary import through the blockade of additional supplies of foodstuffs and textiles.

The Board immediately began pressing for further assurances to be made to the Swiss that larger transblockade quotas of these supplies would be allocated to Switzerland in proportion to the increase in the number of refugees received by her. For an account of later developments in this connection assuring such transblockade shipments see II B, The Blockade.

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In April Harrison reported that the Swiss Government had declined to request German safe-conduct for the "S.S.Tari" in the projected Turkish evacuation on the ground that Swiss support of such a request would impede the efforts of the International Red Cross in that direction (sec VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey). The Swiss Government indicated, however, that it would not refuse to consider participation in a joint step which other neutral states might decide to undertake in this matter for exclusively humanitarian motives (Cable No. 2301 from Bern dated April 13). Harrison subsequently reported that a similar position had been taken by the Foreign Office with respect to InterCross representations concerning safe-conduct for the "S.S. Bellacitta" (Cable No. 2348 from Bern dated April 14).

Harrison was advised of the fact that both the Swedish and Turkish Governments had acted in support of the InterCross request for German safe-conduct for the "Tari." It was suggested that Harrison might wish to bring these circumstances to the attention of the Swiss Government in renewed efforts to obtain an affirmative decision (Cable No. 1395 to Bern dated April 22).

Swiss cooperation was solicited in various ways in connection with facilitating the rescue of child refugees from France (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France).

Swiss cooperation was also requested in connection with the protection and projected exchange of certain internees in France and Germany holding Latin American passports or papers. Moreover, specific instructions were relayed to Switzerland, as the protecting power, with respect to extending protection to certain of these internees claiming U. S. citizenship, pending investigation of their claims. The Board was subsequently advised from Bern that the Swiss Foreign Office had furnished Minister Harrison with the names and citizenship claims of 162 persons removed by the Germans from Camp Vittel to an unknown destination (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports).

In June, Harrison and McClelland were asked to act in connection with reports reaching the Board to the effect that a number of unquestioned nationals and persons claiming the nationality of the United States and of other American republics may be held in camps situated in German and German-controlled territory to which the protecting powers and the International Red Cross have no access, or else access of the most restricted kind. Included in this category are the camps of Belson-Bergen near Hannover, Bergau near Dresden, Drancy near Paris, Theresienstadt, and Tost in Silesia.

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This matter was to be brought to the attention of the Swiss Government, as the protecting power of the United States, so that an investigation might be launched (Cable No. 2149 to Bern dated June 24).

The Board's instructions to Bern on this score were repeated in a Circular Airgram dated June 26 to U.S. Missions in Latin America, so that the various Latin American republics might take parallel action.

In view of the negative response from the International Red Cross in connection with the Board's proposal that the German and satellite governments be approached in an effort to insure more favorable treatment of unassimilated civilian internees in enemy territory. Harrison was next asked to approach the Swiss Government with a request that Swiss authorities transmit and support such a proposal in the interests of insuring the survival of the helpless victims concerned. (See V B - 2 Approaches to the Germans.)

Harrison and McClelland were also asked to investigate and make recommendations in connection with the proposal made by the International Red Cross that stockpiles of relief supplies be built up in Switzerland, to be drawn upon as opportunities arise for their dispatch to relief centers. (See II E, Food and Clothing Stockpiles in Neutral Countries.)

In addition to urging continued assistance to reliable relief organizations in Switzerland, Board Representative McClelland has suggested that if possible all publicity with respect to the progress made by such organizations be avoided, inasmuch as publicity might compromise the aid which neutral authorities, such as the International Red Cross and Swiss officials, might be prepared to lend to rescue and relief operations from Switzerland (Cable No. 3110 from Bern dated May 16).

In June, in accordance with the Board's request, Harrison delivered to the Swiss Foreign Office, for transmission to the Hungarian Government, a note inquiring into the intentions of Hungary with respect to the further treatment of Jews, with special reference to forced deportations, discriminatory reductions in food rations, and the like. The note reiterated the grave view which this Government takes regarding the persecution of Jews and other minorities, as well as its determination to see to it that those who share the responsibility for such crimes are fittingly punished. The Foreign Office accepted this note and agreed to transmit it verbatim. Harrison recommended that no publicity be given to this matter pending delivery of the note and that even then, no mention be made of Swiss intermediation. (See V B - 1, Approaches to the Satellites, and Cable No. 3843 from Bern dated June 16 comprising attachment #15 thereto.)

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See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives; VI D, Evacuations to and through Switzerland; and VI D - 1 through VI D - 5, the latter being other specific projects involving evacuations to Switzerland.

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IV D - 3
attach. #1

CABLE NO. 941 TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT FROM BERN

February 15, 1944

Department's telegram dated February 11, 1944, No. 459, is referred to herewith.

Given below is a preliminary answer to questions in the Department's telegram of January 25, 1944, No. 251.

1. A reply is being awaited by this Legation to the communication to the Swiss Foreign Office regarding War Refugee Board to which reference is made in my telegram of January 31, 1944, No. 624. Also, I am waiting for a reaction to my note of February 5, 1944 (supported by British Legation's concurring note) concerning burden on resources of Switzerland of care of refugees (see Department's telegram of January 20, 1944, No. 190); and also we are waiting for a reply to joint representations made on 9th of February concerning Swiss reception of selected children from France, Belgium and other territories occupied by the Germans (see my cable of February 10, 1944, No. 824). Answers are also pending to messages forwarded by War Refugee Board to International Red Cross Committee (Department's telegrams of January 27, and February 9, 1944, Nos. 279 and 437) regarding funds for relief operations for Jews and other persecuted groups especially in Rumania, Hungary, Theresienstadt, Croatia and Slovakia.

2. More than 70,000 refugees have already been admitted by Switzerland (70,493 as of January 1 according to published figures). Please see my telegram dated October 27, 1942, No. 6729, for comparison of estimate of 63,000 in categories listed in Swiss Government's October 25, note.

3. Swiss Government's general policy in dealing with refugee problem was set forth in my telegram of November 19, 1943, No. 7262. The Swiss Government still makes it a practice to admit refugees in the following categories (see my telegram of March 30, 1943, No. 2004); political refugees (defined as fugitives subject individually to arrest or imprisonment for political beliefs); military deserters; escaped prisoners of war; physically helpless persons (sick persons, pregnant women, aged persons, children and parents accompanying children). A great majority enter clandestinely. In order to lessen risk of detection, fugitives not officially admitted are allowed to leave in the same manner in which they

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cross the frontier, i.e., clandestinely.

It is reported by the press that new entrants are coming in at the rate of about 90 to 100 a night, the bulk of them from Italy. Among Italians the percentage of Jews is very high.

5. The following factors seem to motivate the Swiss Government's restriction of entry of non-Swiss refugees, in addition to problem of lodging and feeding refugees; fear of giving encouragement to anti-Semitism; high percentage of foreigners in Switzerland, about 400,000 or 10 percent of the total population; the belief that the admission of an increasing number of refugees who are enemies of the Nazi regime might compromise the neutrality of the Swiss (indicated in the Swiss Government's November 16 note last quoted in my telegram of November 19 mentioned above).

Evidently the furnishing of funds from abroad is less important than furnishing food and clothing for the refugees as indicated by the Swiss Government's and National Bank's disinclination to make Swiss francs generally available for local purchases against blocked dollars on behalf of refugees.

6. While it was intimated by the Foreign Office in its November 16 note that financial "facilities" may become necessary, it was stated that there was actual need for clothing and blankets and foodstuffs for refugees and that it was hoped that requests for license to purchase and transport replacement stocks of clothing and food would be given sympathetic consideration by the American Government.

7. Latest available information concerning condition of refugees in Axis and Axis occupied territory as received from informed sources has been provided continuously to the Department by the Legation. The Legation is giving its advice and assistance to such private organizations as the Unitarian Service Committee, the Joint Distribution Committee, World Jewish Congress, and others in their attempt to organize and finance relief in European areas from Switzerland as the center. Progress has been made in general and I am pleased to report that federal authorities of Switzerland have shown no disposition to be other than helpful in these respects.

HARRISON

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CABLE NO. 1304 FROM BERN TO THE BOARD

March 4, 1944

Not paraphrased

"My dear Minister, by letter of February 2, you kindly informed me of the decision of the President of the United States to create an inter-departmental board for refugee questions. At the same time you advised me of your Government's purpose in this matter and you (*) me to what extent the Swiss Government would be ready to collaborate in the relief work contemplated by the Government of the United States. Finally, you ask for any suggestions we might wish to make.

Concerning the contribution of Switzerland to the solution of the problem, you are aware, I believe, of our past and present efforts. We have kept you regularly informed in this respect. I may therefore be brief on this point more so as the political (*) in its note verbale of November 16 last stated very exactly, for the information of your Government, the manner in which the problem of refugees and internees, Jews and non-Jews, presents itself for Switzerland.

I shall, therefore, restrict myself to specifying that, according to the latest statistics out of 70,500 refugees and internees of all categories in Switzerland at the beginning of 1944, about 53,000 of which 22,000 are Jews, fall approximately within the classification of persons referred to in your inquiry.

This being said, I must remind you that notwithstanding the great desire of our population that our country be receptive and hospitable, our authorities have had to take into account the risk to our security of having a massive unchecked influx of foreigners, possibly containing undesirable elements and also requirements of national defence particularly in certain regions. Security of Switzerland in the long run is also security of those who have taken refuge there.

Apart from persons with military status, Switzerland, as is known now, admits into its territory as far as circumstances permit in particular: political refugees, sick people and pregnant women, aged persons over 65 and their wives or husbands, infants or very young people; persons with close relatives in Switzerland; finally, the women who have lost their Swiss nationality through marriage with their husbands if any.

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* Apparent omission.

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After an obligatory period of quarantine refugees are, in principle, distributed among labor camps or in hospitals or homes for adults or children or also in private homes. Cost of upkeep of refugees is borne by authorities and by charitable institutions; only very exceptionally may they carry on a private lucrative occupation. On the other hand payment in the form of salary is made to those who perform regular work in establishments where they are sheltered. Refugees who have private resources may, under certain conditions, live in hotels or in apartments or be taken in by relatives or friends. Refugees naturally keep their belongings. In their own interest, securities and money, which they carry when they arrive, are deposited in a bank and competent authorities decide under what conditions interested parties may dispose of deposits.

After having overcome difficult problems of organization, principal concern of our authorities is now to occupy refugees by means taking into account present situation and economic future of our population.

Having thus briefly summarized situation, it remains for me to touch on the last paragraph of your aide memoire. You will not be surprised-- through observation and knowledge of our practices over several years-- and it will certainly be understood in Washington that while contributing as substantial aid as possible in specific cases as it has constantly done since the beginning of war Switzerland by the very nature of its strict neutrality cannot associate itself formally with initiatives of belligerent governments. Maintenance of this attitude, far from hindering its effective activity and while properly speaking not constituting a ruling factor, does, on the contrary tend at least to reinforce the position whereby Switzerland is still able, in the heart of Europe, to continue its contribution to practical accomplishments in the field of relief to war victims.

We could not find a better medium than you to explain to the American Government that while we are anxious to persevere along the lines we have traced for ourselves and to continue to give the greatest effect within our means, limited, of course, by existing circumstances and our present state, to the feelings of human solidarity which animate the Swiss people, our activities must remain independent and autonomous. That is the reason why we are always anxious to avoid having relief which we give here or there from becoming a subject of controversy between belligerents.

It is hardly necessary to assure you that in the future as in the past we shall be ready to examine in a spirit imbued with practical realism as well as sympathetic understanding, the specific cases in which our cooperation may be judged compatible with the principles

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mentioned above. Thus as you are aware, in compliance with a request from the inter-governmental Committee at London inspired by the American and British Governments, we have undertaken to approach the French authorities at Vichy regarding the possibility of obtaining emigration permits for children of refugees threatened with deportation or whose parents have been deported or threatened with deportation.

I wish to add that it would be useful to us to be kept informed of the measures which will be taken as a result of the recent decisions of the President of the United States."

HARRISON

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IV D-3
attach.#3

CABLE NO. 190 TO BERN FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT

January 20, 1944

Not paraphrased

Department has received comments of British Government on proposed communication set forth in Department's 3159, December 17. Certain modifications have been proposed and agreed to by Department and FEA and revised text is as follows, a paraphrase of which should be prepared for submission in form of a note to Swiss Foreign Office.

"The American and British Governments are aware of and greatly appreciate the generous reception extended by the Swiss Government to the large number of refugees who have made their way to Switzerland. The time is anticipated when these refugees may be repatriated, and the British and United States Governments will cooperate in every way toward the achievement of that end. The two governments are conscious of the burden upon Swiss resources which has resulted from the care of such refugees, and will be glad to give sympathetic consideration to such proposals as the Swiss Government may wish to make toward easing the burden which such care has placed upon the economy of Switzerland. The Swiss Government may be assured that the Governments of the United Kingdom and of the United States will give as favorable consideration as may be permitted by the circumstances to requests for the purchase and extraordinary import through the blockade of additional supplies of food stuffs and textiles to relieve the burden placed on Swiss resources as a consequence of assistance extended to refugees. Reference is made in this connection to telegram 2537 of October 15, from the Department of State to the American Legation at Bern, in which mention was made of the sympathetic attitude in the United States on the part of various relief organizations and their desire to be of assistance.

"The American and British Governments suggest that opportunity may be taken of the Swiss Economic Delegation's visit to London to discuss with representatives of the two governments any further questions in connection with the refugee problem which the Swiss Government may wish to raise."

Department has suggested to British Government that since note as revised speaks for both governments, the British Minister might be instructed to inform Swiss Foreign Office that he supports our note rather than submitting an identical note in behalf of his Government.

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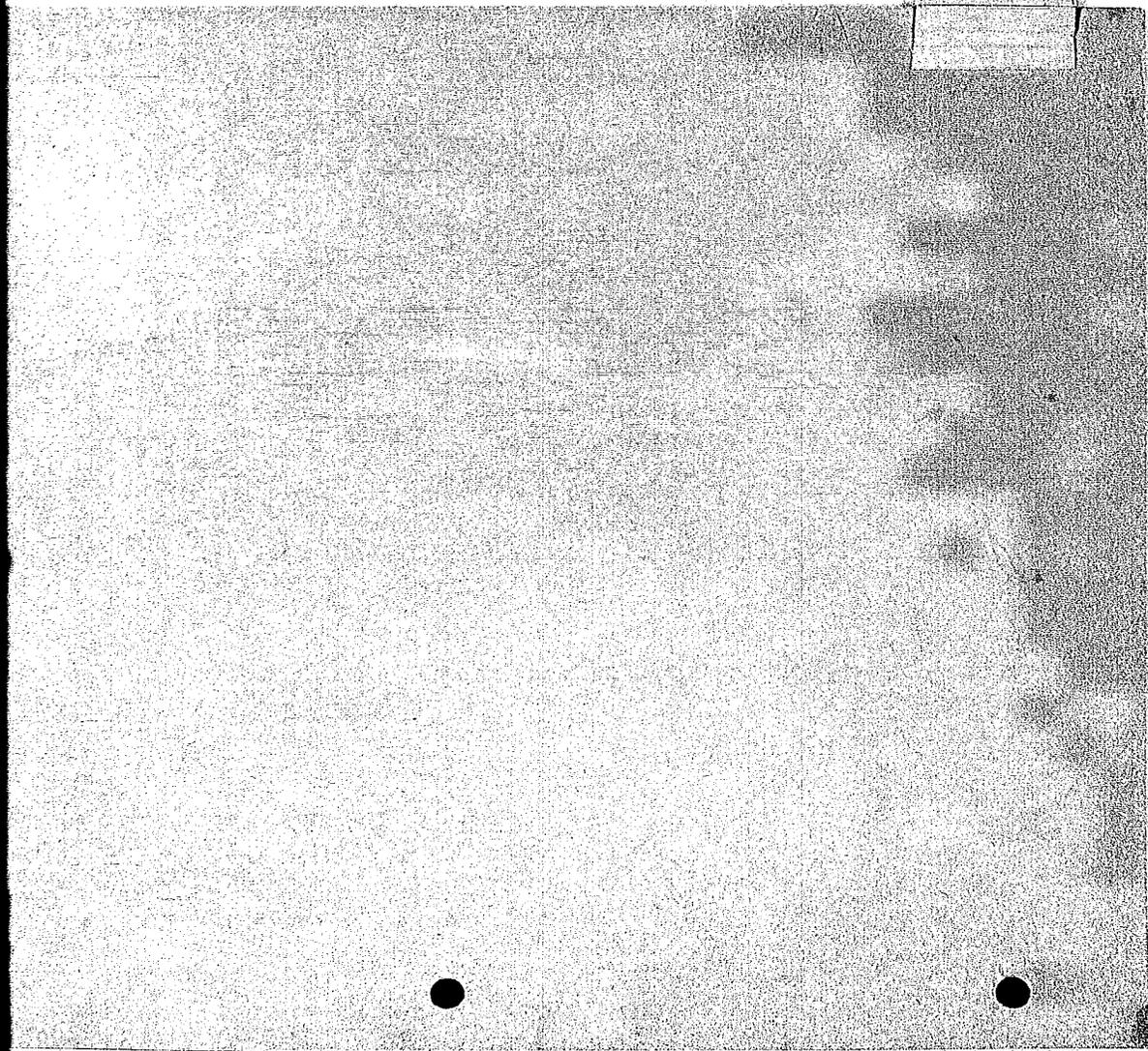
Note should not (repeat not) be presented until British Minister, after having received instructions from his government, shall have discussed matter with Legation.

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Coop. Portugal



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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: NEUTRAL EUROPEAN

PORTUGAL

A report received from Minister Norweb soon after the Board's inception indicated that the Portuguese Foreign Office viewed with sympathy U. S. policy on refugees and would continue its liberal attitude toward refugees along broad humanitarian lines (Cable No. 468 from Lisbon dated February 15; see also Airgram No. A-192 from Lisbon dated March 14). A subsequent report from Norweb transmitted four memoranda relating to Portugal and the refugee problem: a detailed historical summary prepared by the Lisbon representative of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, a memorandum prepared by the American Friends Service Committee on what this Government as well as Portuguese authorities might do, a similar memorandum submitted by the Unitarian Service Committee, and a memorandum along the same lines prepared by the Emigration Association of the Hebrew Immigration Aid and Sheltering Society. A statistical summary of the estimated foreign Jewish population in Portugal in February 1944 was appended to the latter memorandum. (See Dispatch No. 217 from Lisbon dated February 16.)

In line with the Board's policy of bringing pressure to bear on satellite governments to desist from abetting persecutions, a request was dispatched to Norweb, as well as to other U. S. Missions, asking that certain information be relayed through such channels as were available to the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary (Cable No. 713 to Lisbon dated March 7; see V B - 1, Approaches to the Satellites, and attachment #2 thereto).

In reply Norweb advised the Board that the substance of this government's warning to the satellite governments being conveyed to the Bulgarian and Hungarian Governments, and that steps were also being taken to have the message conveyed to the Rumanian Government (Cable No. 779 from Lisbon dated March 11; see attachment #3 to V B - 1).

Another communication from the Board to Norweb, inspired by German military movements and intensified controls throughout Rumania and

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Hungary, urged continued effort toward increasing Rumanian and Hungarian resistance to Nazi demands with respect to anti-Jewish persecutions (Cable No. 1013 to Lisbon dated April 12; see attachment #4 to V B - 1).

With respect to the President's statement on atrocities against the Jews, Minister Norweb reported prominent notices in Lisbon and Oporto newspapers, Diario de Noticias, the largest Portuguese daily, having printed the statement at the top of the front page, as did certain other papers. Editorials praising the President's sentiments, as well as favorable comment over a local radio station, were also reported (Cables No. 905 and 973 from Lisbon dated March 26 and April 1; Dispatches No. 343 and 346 from Lisbon dated March 31 and April 1; see also V A - 1, Presidential Statement).

A report in early April from the JDC representative in Lisbon indicated that there might be a possibility of obtaining a Portuguese vessel for the purpose of evacuating refugees from Rumania to Turkey (see Cable No. 296 to Ankara dated April 4). Because of the increasing number of refugees, Ambassador Steinhardt urgently recommended from Ankara that efforts be made to conclude negotiations for such a vessel (see VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey). Minister Norweb and the Board's Representative in Portugal, Robert Dexter, were asked to lend all possible assistance to the JDC representative in these efforts (Cable No. 1059 to Lisbon dated April 17).

In April, in an effort to encourage the Spanish and Portuguese Governments to give refuge to additional refugee children from France, this Government authorized consular officers in Spain and Portugal to issue up to 1,000 visas to such children arriving during the first six months of 1944. The U. S. Embassy in Madrid was given the responsibility for supervising and controlling the assignment of quota numbers to consular offices in both Spain and Portugal (Cable No. 1008 to Madrid dated April 12).

Certain proposals on the part of Isaac Weissman, representative of the World Jewish Congress, concerning the eventual destinations of refugee children arriving in Portugal from France, were subsequently brought to the Board's attention by Board Representative Dexter. The Board in turn indicated its conviction that the problem of where to send the children who are being rescued -- i.e., whether they should receive Palestine certificates or Canadian or U. S. visas -- should be determined after they have reached safety, on the basis of facilities existing at that time (see VI B - 2, Evacuation of Children from France to Spain and Portugal).

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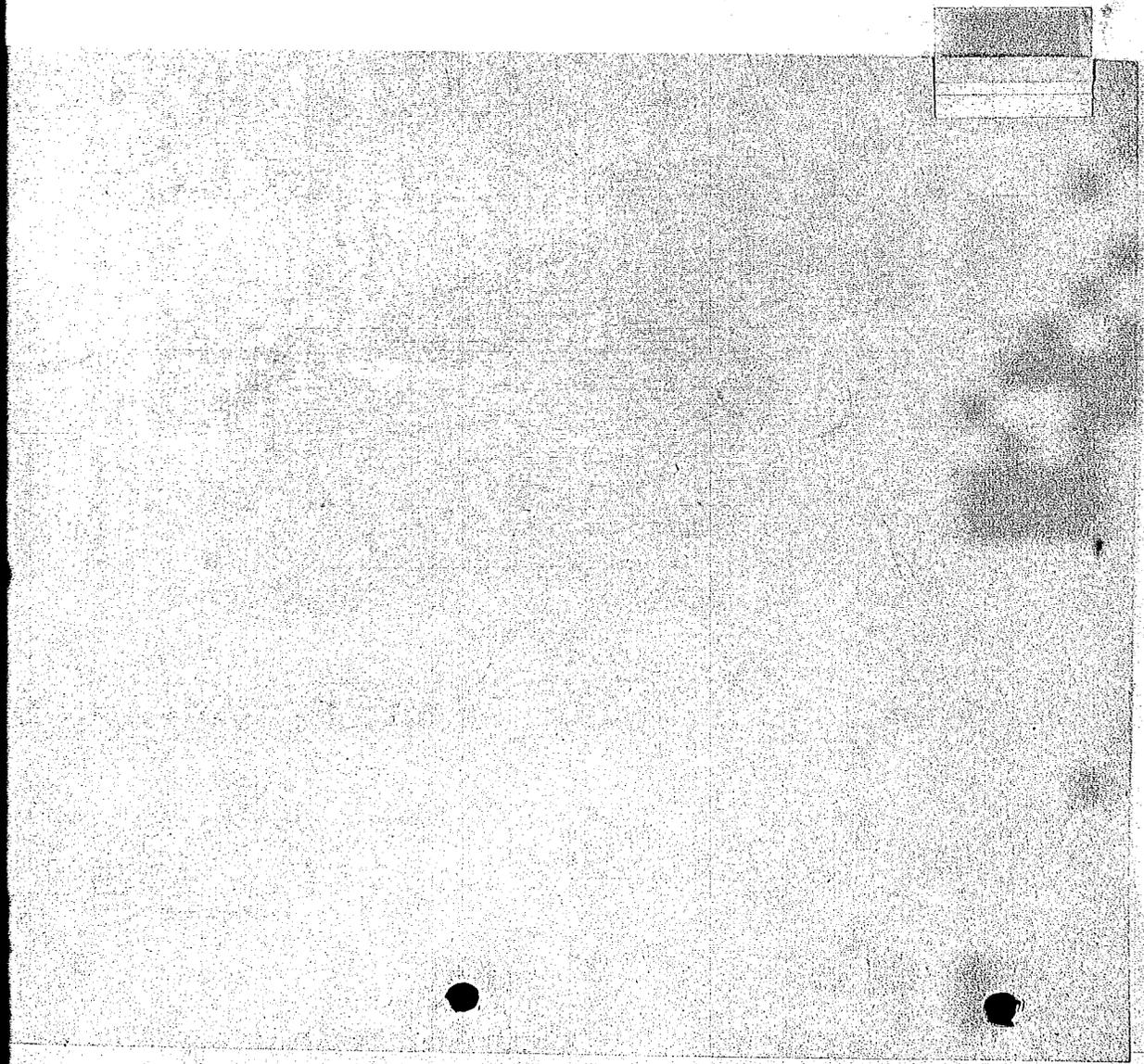
Detailed reports with respect to the refugee situation in general in Portugal were also forwarded by Dexter, including an account of his dealings with the Portuguese representatives of various private rescue and relief agencies.

See III A, Appointment of Special Representatives, particularly the account of the mission to Portugal of James H. Mann, Assistant Executive Director of the Board, to confer with Dexter as well as with representatives of both the World Jewish Congress and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

See also VI B, Evacuations to and through Spain and Portugal.

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SWEDEN

Reports were received from Minister Johnson in Stockholm setting forth what the Swedish Government has been doing with respect to refugees from Norway, Denmark, and other countries. Among the refugees in Sweden there are an estimated 18,000 Norwegians, 14,000 Danes, and 3,500 German-speaking refugees, as well as others from Poland, Holland, and the Balkan states. Virtually all Norwegian Jews except those deported in the early stages of German occupation are reported to have escaped to Sweden. All full Jews in Denmark are said to have escaped to Sweden except for an estimated 1,200 who had already been deported by the Nazis. The rescue of these thousands of refugees was reported to have been facilitated by the liberal attitude of the Swedish Government. (See Cable No. 480 dated February 13 and Cables No. 481 and 503 dated February 15.)

Excerpts were also forwarded to the Board from a recent report on refugees in Sweden by Iver Olsen, Financial Attache of the U. S. Legation in Stockholm, subsequently named Special Representative of the Board for Sweden.

Later in February the Board addressed a memorandum to the Minister of Sweden to the United States, asking immediate consideration on the part of the Swedish Government to the possibility of making certain Swedish ships available for the transportation of additional refugees from Constanza and other Black Sea ports to Turkey. Particular efforts were made to arrange for the use of the "S.S. Bardaland" (Cable No. 642 from Ankara dated April 10).

Ambassador Winant subsequently advised the Board from London that diversion of a Swedish vessel from the Greek relief fleet had informally been approved by the British. Word was subsequently received that, in the absence of a German safe-conduct covering proposed evacuation operations, the "Bardaland" had sailed from Piraeus on another mission. (See VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey.)

In line with the Board's policy of bringing pressure to bear on satellite governments to desist from abetting persecutions, a request

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was dispatched to Minister Johnson, as well as to other U. S. Missions, asking that certain information be relayed through such channels as were available to the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary (see V B - 1, Approaches to the Satellites, and Cable No. 372 to Stockholm dated March 7, comprising attachment #2 thereto).

In March Johnson reported that although the Swedish Government had been urged to make a public appeal to Germany to permit refugee children to come to Sweden from Poland, it had not taken action because of its conviction that Germany would reject any such appeal. A report was subsequently received from London indicating that circumstances would appear to be favorable at this time for encouraging the Swedish Government to request that the Germans release up to 20,000 refugee children of all nationalities (Cable No. 2162 from London dated March 16). Accordingly, the Board cabled Johnson, asking him to approach the Swedish Government and request that it take such action. It was pointed out to Johnson, for the information of the Swedish Government, that such an appeal should not prejudice the possibility of refugees escaping unnoticed, a fear previously expressed by the Swedes, since the evacuation of refugees from Denmark had been completed. The Board indicated that it would undertake to meet the Swedish request made in this connection in 1943 with respect to assurances as to the eventual evacuation of the children from Sweden, the delivery of additional foodstuffs for their maintenance while in Sweden, and financial assistance in their maintenance while there (Cable No. 654 to Stockholm dated April 12).

With respect to the President's statement of March 24, Minister Johnson reported a fairly general coverage in Stockholm newspapers, with less coverage throughout the rest of Sweden. Excerpts from the President's statement were given in official Swedish news broadcasts in the Swedish language over short, medium, and long wave lengths. The statement was also relayed through underground channels to Norway and Denmark and may thus have to come to the attention of occupation forces in those countries (Cable No. 1345 from Stockholm dated April 18). Informal requests by the Legation that prominent government officials publicly comment on the statement were unsuccessful (Cable No. 1236 from Stockholm dated April 11; see V A - 1, Presidential Statement).

Johnson also reported that the Swedish Government had agreed to make every effort to hasten action on the part of the Germans with respect to the granting of safe-conduct for the "S.S. Tari." The matter of safe-conduct for the "S.S. Bellacitta" was also to be discussed (Cable No. 1255 from Stockholm dated April 13; see VI C, Evacuations to and through Turkey).

As a result of other Board representations, the Swedish Government in April authorized the issuance of visas permitting the evacuation from

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Finland to Sweden of certain Jewish refugees from central Europe (see VI E - 6, Evacuation of Refugees from Finland).

Reports received from two private organizations in Sweden and dealing with the situation of Jews and stateless refugees in that country, were transmitted by Olsen later in April. Even before the war began, Sweden is said to have supplied refuge for some 3,000 Jewish refugees. In 1942 nearly half of Norway's 1500 Jews are reported to have reached Sweden, the balance having been deported to Germany. In 1943 thousands of Danish Jews arrived.

Many refugees have been able to obtain employment in Sweden. Although the Jewish population has trebled in the past few years, little anti-Semitism is reported. The Swedish Government is described as having "constantly shown great understanding and given extensive cooperation" to private Jewish relief societies. Many non-Jewish organizations are also said to have been of great assistance (Dispatch No. 3223 from Stockholm dated April 24).

In view of a report reaching the Board to the effect that several Polish ships carrying food and clothing originally intended for the Polish civilian population had been tied up for some time at Stockholm, Johnson and Board Representative Olsen were asked to attempt to verify this report and, in the event it proved to be accurate, to report in detail on the ships and their cargoes (Cable No. 755 to Stockholm dated April 25). In response Johnson stated that the report was apparently in error, since there was no knowledge locally of any such ships. Johnson did indicate, however, that approximately five tons of used clothing from the United States destined for Polish war refugees arrived last June in a Swedish vessel and are now stored in free harbor pending authorization from London and Washington of its distribution (Cable No. 1534 from Stockholm dated May 1).

According to another report from Stockholm, Swedish authorities are placing no obstacles in the way of Estonian fishing craft engaged in rescuing refugees from Estonia and transporting them to Sweden. A greater number of Estonians are said to be in hiding in the forests of that country at the present time than during the Russian regime, since most Estonians desperately fear being sent to Germany (Cable No. 1512 from Stockholm dated April 29).

Board Representative Olsen also advised the Board of discussions held with the Chief Rabbi of Sweden, who is described as directing the work of two Swedish committees actively engaged in relief operations for Jews in Europe. Olsen's report summarized the activities of these two groups in Rumania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, France, and other German-controlled areas. Much of the current activities of these committees

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is said to have been made possible by the Swedish Foreign Office. Communication with persons in enemy and occupied territory, for example, has reportedly been through facilities of the Foreign Office and Swedish missions in the various countries.

Olsen reported that the two groups were short of funds, however, and strongly urged that arrangements be made for supplying them with \$50,000. In Olsen's opinion, with proper financial support, refugee relief as well as actual rescue operations from Sweden can be expanded to a considerable degree. (Cable No. 1622 from Stockholm dated May 8).

In response to this report, the Board cabled Olsen that the matter of financing activities of the two Swedish relief committees reportedly in need of funds had been discussed with several American organizations. Olsen was advised of the general consensus that relief and rescue activities with respect to refugees in Rumania, Slovakia, Hungary, and southern France can most effectively be handled from Switzerland, to which large sums are already being remitted regularly from this country. The Board indicated, however, that certain American organizations are interested in the possibilities of accelerating rescue and relief work from Sweden in Poland and the Baltic area, and that funds will be made available by these groups for such activities. Olsen was asked to report on the possibilities and the amount needed in this connection (Cable No. 984 to Stockholm dated May 23).

Olsen subsequently raised the question as to what concern the Board will have with the problems of bringing immediate relief to European refugees when hostilities cease. Numerous Swedish organizations are said to be engaged in such post-war planning, and the Swedish Government itself is reported to have appointed a commission and made a large appropriation in connection with promoting plans for immediate post-war action. Olsen stated that the Swedish Government is obviously interested in what this Government is planning along similar lines and would like to cooperate (Cable No. 1719 from Stockholm dated May 15).

In response to this inquiry Olsen was advised that while the Board itself has no assigned jurisdiction in this particular field, U. S. military authorities, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and the Intergovernmental Committee have all had discussions and made plans along these lines (Cable No. 1140 to Stockholm dated June 7).

In June, Johnson relayed to the Board the principal features of an exhaustive summary of conditions in Hungary prepared by the Swedish Foreign Office on the basis of reports from the Swedish Minister in Hungary and made available to the Board in strictest confidence (see V B - 1 a, Conditions in Hungary, and Cable No. 2187 from Stockholm dated June 17 comprising attachment #2 thereto).

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Johnson and Olsen also reported that the Swedish Foreign Office had agreed to appoint a Special Attache to the Swedish Legation at Budapest for the specific purpose of following and reporting on the situation in Hungary, particularly the persecution of Jews and other minority groups. While no trouble was anticipated in connection with obtaining a visa for the individual who is to serve in this capacity, the Foreign Office indicated that if the visa should be refused, the Swedish Government would in turn simply refuse to receive the Hungarian Charge d'Affaires (see V B - 1a and Cable No. 2231 from Stockholm dated June 21 comprising attachment #16 thereto).

See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: NEUTRAL EUROPEAN

EIRE

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A report from Minister Gray in Dublin indicated that the problem of receiving refugees in Eire is intimately bound up with the problems of military security and food. Transportation is another difficulty (Airgram No. A-7 dated February 10).

In another communication from the Legation in Ireland there is contained a report of an anti-Semitic demonstration in Dublin, the first that has come to public notice in Eire in some time. Although there are reportedly only 3,300 Jews in Dublin out of a population of 500,000, many Irish are said to be passionately opposed to them and express their anti-Semitic feelings openly. Moreover, German radio propaganda directed to Eire is said to have urged Catholic Irish listeners to beware of the Jews. It was pointed out that the Board may wish to consider the anti-Semitic feelings which are said to be widely prevalent among all classes of Irish in connection with any project for sending Jewish refugees to that country (Dispatch No. 811 dated February 25).

In response to the implied possibility of the acceptance of some 500 Jewish child refugees, the Board asked Gray to inform the Irish officials concerned of this Government's acceptance of their humanitarian offer to provide such a haven and to advise them further that the Board is endeavoring to obtain shipping facilities to transport the children to Eire. The Minister was also asked to raise informally with the Irish Government the question of whether they are willing to take up with the Vichy Government the matter of evacuating refugee children from France. Inquiry was also to be made as to whether the Irish are at present willing to guarantee to Switzerland that they will accept from that country after the war 500 Jewish refugee children evacuated from France (Cable No. 39 dated March 14; see attachment #1).

An affirmative reply was received from the Irish Department of External Affairs in response to the Board's request that 500 child refugees be accepted by that country. The Irish indicated, however, that so far they have had no success in securing permission for Jews to leave occupied countries. Accordingly, it was suggested that this Government ask the Swiss Government to obtain the necessary permits, even though the Irish Charge d'Affaires in Berlin has been instructed to make a similar request (see Airgram No. A-16 from Dublin dated April 13 comprising attachment #2; see also VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France).

000105

IV D - 6
attach. #1

CABLE NO. 39 TO DUBLIN FROM THE BOARD

March 14, 1944

Refer your A-7 of February 10, 1944 regarding the rescue and relief of war refugees.

Please inform the appropriate Irish officials that this Government accepts with deep appreciation the generous and humanitarian offer which we understand the Irish Government is prepared to make to receive and provide haven for 500 Jewish refugee children.

It is anticipated that these 500 children may be able to leave France and to enter Eire by transit through Spain and Portugal.

We are presently examining the matter of securing the shipping space necessary for the transportation of these children and will advise you further with respect thereto. We are also canvassing the possibility of assisting the Irish Government in its humanitarian endeavor, with respect to supplies of food and clothing.

The Swiss Government has been requested to take up the matter of evacuating children from France with Vichy, and we are considering the desirability of requesting similar action on the part of the Irish Government, as we understand that it was prepared last year or earlier this year to take such action. However, we would appreciate your informally raising this matter with the appropriate Irish authorities to ascertain whether they are still prepared to make such an approach to Vichy.

You are also requested to ask the appropriate Irish authorities whether their Government would be willing presently to guarantee the admission into Eire after the war of an additional 500 Jewish refugee children in the event that they are evacuated from France to Switzerland during the war. Such a guarantee would probably enable us to induce the Swiss Government, which may be in a position to obtain the release of children from Vichy, to accept larger numbers of them for the duration of hostilities.

We will appreciate being kept promptly and fully advised of all developments.

HULL

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IV-D - 6
attach. #2

AIRGRAM NO. A-16 FROM DUBLIN TO THE BOARD

April 13, 1944

Reference to Department's telegram No. 39, March 14, from War Refugee Board.

The War Refugee Board's telegram was made available to the Irish Department of External Affairs, and there is quoted below the reply of Mr. Joseph P. Walshe, Permanent Secretary of the Department.

"Dear Mr. Gray,

"I received your letter dated the 22nd March enclosing copy of a telegram from the War Refugee Board.

"The Government will be very glad to receive and provide haven for the 500 Jewish refugee children. The Executive Committee of the Red Cross have given their full agreement, and they are ready to make arrangements at once for the housing and reception of the children.

"I should let you know, however, that so far we have had no success in securing permission for Jews to leave the occupied countries, and it might be better if your Government would ask the Swiss Government to obtain the necessary permits. However, we are instructing our Charge d'Affaires in Berlin to make a further request.

"I shall write you later about the guarantee concerning the further 500 refugees mentioned at the end of the telegram."

In the event that the Irish Government has any success in obtaining permission for the Jewish children to leave the occupied countries, the Department will be immediately advised.

GRAY

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Latin American

100108

COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

BOLIVIA

In a communication from the U. S. Embassy in Bolivia the Board was advised that it is practically impossible to determine under present circumstances (and, as directed, without approaching present Bolivian authorities) to what extent Jewish war refugees are permitted to enter Bolivia. In the course of previous diplomatic correspondence the revolutionary government is reported to have indicated that, as a member of the Intergovernmental Committee, "its conduct with respect to Semites will be in accordance with that adopted by the other nations of the continent. Within the country, nationals and foreigners shall enjoy the same guarantees under the Political Constitution of the State without distinction as to whether they are Jews or not."

The President of the Bolivian Revolutionary Junta is reported to have remarked that he has no anti-Jewish prejudices; it has been indicated that the only "concern" of the Bolivian Junta is that Bolivia obtain in future immigration persons who are technically qualified to fulfill the needs of the Bolivian economy. In this connection the Embassy reports a general resentment that Jewish immigrants admitted to Bolivia in recent years have competed with established Bolivian merchants and small shopkeepers when many of these immigrants were officially admitted with the understanding that they were to engage in agriculture. (See Dispatch No. 3122 from La Paz dated February 10.)

In May the Bolivian Government was approached, through the U.S. Embassy there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. At the same time Bolivian support was to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto; see also Airgram No. A-212 from La Paz dated May 16 and Airgram No. A-221 to La Paz dated June 2).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

CUBA

According to a report from the U. S. Embassy in Havana in response to State's circular airgram of January 26, immigration into Cuba has practically ceased since the early part of 1942 as a result of a decree of April 18, 1942, forbidding the granting of visas to nationals or natives of Axis or Axis-occupied countries, for security reasons. The attitude of the Cuban authorities toward the refugee problem was described by Ambassador Briggs as "indifferent, if not slightly hostile, with little more than lip service being accorded to its humanitarian aspects" (Dispatch No. 6149 dated March 1).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Cuba and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

Ambassador Braden in Havana in turn indicated his belief that if the care of child refugees were left to Cuban authorities, local irregularities would probably occur, particularly in connection with any financing that might be arranged by the Board. Braden therefore suggested that, before he approaches the Cuban Government on the matter of giving to Switzerland the assurances requested, it should be ascertained whether the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee would be prepared to care for such children through the Joint Relief Committee in Havana and to provide the latter with the necessary funds. (unnumbered airgram from Havana dated April 22). # 892

A commitment guarantying the maintenance of 1,000 children was sub-

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sequently obtained by the Board from the JDC, and Braden was so advised (Airgram No. A-835 to Havana dated May 22).

According to a report from Minister Harrison in Bern, the Cuban Government, in response to an inquiry from the Vatican, indicated that passports issued in her name to Jews in German-held territory would be recognized by Cuba if Great Britain and the United States had no objection (Cable No. 2282 from Bern dated April 13; see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and attachment #8 thereto). Ambassador Braden in Havana was therefore promptly instructed to convey to the Cuban authorities this Government's assurance that it had no objection to Cuban recognition of such documents (Airgram No. A-738 to Havana dated May 3).

Ambassador Winant in London was asked to request that a similar assurance be given by Great Britain to Cuba (Cable No. 3644 to London dated May 6). Winant subsequently reported that the British Minister at Havana had been instructed to extend such assurance (Cable No. 3982 from London dated May 17).

The Board also asked Ambassador Braden to request the Cuban Government to support this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, toward arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees in Axis territory holding Latin American passports and papers.

According to a later report from the U. S. Embassy in Havana, the Cuban Ministry of State indicated that it had been approached on this matter by the Netherlands Embassy in Washington rather than by the Vatican, and that its answer was that the question of the validity of passports issued in the name of Cuba would not be raised by the Cuban Government for the duration. If the German Government should make an issue of the fact that certain of these passports were improperly issued, however, it was reported that the Cuban Government would be "unable" to extend its protection.

No categorical answer regarding the possible eventual immigration to Cuba of bearers of illegal passports appears to have been given to the Netherlands Embassy. According to the Embassy's report, Cuba apparently will defer solution of this problem until the persons involved are outside enemy territory (Airgram No. A-968 from Havana dated May 6).

The Board in turn communicated to Braden its concern over the report that Cuba would be "unable" to extend her protection in the event the German Government should challenge the validity of certain passports issued in her name. Braden was asked to approach the Cuban Government again on this score, as well as with respect to taking the affirmative

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actions previously requested. Cuban officials were to be advised that in any exchange negotiations entered into, it would of course be understood that unquestioned citizens of Cuba are to be considered by this Government as being in a category entitled to priority over others (Airgram No. A-842 to Havana dated May 22).

Braden later informed the Board that he had been advised by the Ministry of State that, in accordance with the Embassy's representations, the Cuban Embassy in Madrid was being instructed to make urgent representations in support of this Government's approach to the Spanish Government with respect to the return of the refugees said to have been deported from Vittel (Airgram No. A-1071 from Havana dated May 19).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Prior to the receipt of an official response from the Dominican Republic, the U. S. Embassy there reported that the government admits refugees at the present time without restriction, such refugees being maintained by various U. S. organizations (Airgram No. A-62 from Ciudad Trujillo dated February 7).

The Foreign Office subsequently indicated that it would cooperate fully with the war refugee policy of this Government. The United States' policy, the Dominican note asserted, coincides with that followed by the Dominican Government since 1937 when, on the occasion of the Evian Conference, the Dominican delegation was instructed to indicate that the Dominican Republic was prepared to receive up to 100,000 European immigrants. This policy was put into practice a short time afterward, according to the Foreign Office, with the signing of a contract with the Association for the Establishment of Colonists in the Republic, by virtue of which a great number of refugees are said to have been provided refuge (Dispatch No. 1635 from Ciudad Trujillo dated March 27).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in the Dominican Republic and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

In response to representations made by the U. S. Embassy there, the Dominican Foreign Office indicated that it would receive a minimum of 1,000 refugee children up to 16 years of age and a maximum of 2,000. Upon

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their arrival in the Dominican Republic, it was stated that private institutions subsidized by the State would take care of them (Cable No. 219 from Ciudad Trujillo dated May 4).

This Government's sincere appreciation of the Dominican Republic's generous offer was promptly indicated. At the same time the U. S. Mission there was requested to ascertain whether or not the Foreign Office had instructed its mission in Bern to notify the Swiss Government of the Dominican offer. In the event that there had been no formal Swiss notification, the Foreign Office was to be asked to take such action (Cable No. 200 to Ciudad Trujillo dated May 17).

According to the Embassy's response, the Foreign Minister has informally indicated that, since the Dominican Republic has no mission in Switzerland, it is his intention to send a note to the U. S. Embassy in the Dominican Republic requesting that the Swiss Government be informed of the Dominican offer through the U. S. Legation in Bern. It was also indicated that the proposed note would suggest that this Government accept responsibility for the actual issuance of the visas (Cable No. 240 from Ciudad Trujillo dated May 19).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

ECUADOR

In a communication from the U. S. Embassy in Ecuador the Board was advised that there are no special restrictions in Ecuador against the entry of Jews into that country on national or religious grounds, although like all other immigrants they are required by law and regulations to enter for certain specified purposes, more particularly, to engage in agricultural activities or activities related to essential industries, to be technicians, or to engage in professions.

Insofar as physically fit refugees are concerned, it was reported that there would seem to be opportunities in Ecuador, as in other relatively undeveloped countries of the Americas having land suitable for agricultural exploitation. With respect to non-agricultural refugees, the Embassy's report suggested that it might be preferable to establish temporary camps for the duration of the war, maintained by governmental or philanthropic funds.

The Embassy's report concluded with the statement that it would be helpful if this Government could present some concrete plan to the Ecuadorian Government on the subject (Dispatch No. 1041 from Quito dated February 7).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Ecuador and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

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According to a communication from the U. S. Embassy in Ecuador, this matter was referred by the Foreign Minister to the Ecuadorian President, and a decision was expected momentarily (Cable No. 471 from Quito dated May 13).

The Board also asked that the Government of Ecuador be approached, through the U. S. Mission there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports and consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Ecuadorian approval was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

The Ecuadorian Minister for Foreign Affairs, when approached on the matter, is said to have referred to a reply given on March 30 to the British Minister in response to a similar inquiry. In this reply the Ecuadorian Government is said to have stated that it is not disposed to confirm the validity of unauthorized passports, but that it will not cancel such documents prior to the date their holders reach places of safety. Ecuadorian consular officers abroad are said to have been advised of the Ecuadorian position on this matter (Dispatch No. 1388 from Quito dated April 18).

It was subsequently reported that Ecuador was sending a telegram to the German Government, through the Swiss Government, requesting that the rights of persons claiming Ecuadorian nationality be safeguarded. With respect to the proposed exchange negotiations, inquiry was made in the course of discussions as to what country would bear the expense of the exchange. Consul Gantebein indicated to the Foreign Minister his understanding that the United States would bear all of the expense insofar as the American republics are concerned (Airgram No. A-245 from Quito dated May 6).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

EL SALVADOR

The Israelite Community of El Salvador, according to a report from Ambassador Thurston, has indicated its willingness to support up to 150 Jewish refugees of any nationality until they become self-sustaining. The Government of El Salvador is reported to have expressed sympathy for the cause but to have stated that popular antipathy and dense population have caused it to impose certain restrictions sharply limiting the number of immigrants admitted to that country. The possibility of a discussion of the refugee problem at a forthcoming Cabinet meeting in El Salvador was noted (Dispatch No. 1230 dated February 2).

In response to the U. S. Embassy's note soliciting cooperation in refugee matters, the Salvadoran Government reported that "for reasons of humanity and convenience" it has agreed to permit the entry, on agreement in each case, of certain aged Jews closely related to persons having resided in El Salvador for ten years or more and able to support them. This arrangement is also said to include children under 16 under the guardianship or charge of immigrant Jews. Certain refugee experts and technicians are also reportedly permitted entry (Dispatch No. 1261 from San Salvador dated February 8).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in El Salvador and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

El Salvador in turn expressed sympathy with the Board's efforts in this respect and indicated that it would be willing to accept approximately 100 children. Inquiry was made, however, as to whether the cost

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of constructing a suitable building and other maintenance expenses would be borne by the Board (Dispatch No. 1531 from San Salvador dated May 4).

The Board also asked that the Government of El Salvador be approached, through the U. S. Mission there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports and consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. El Salvadoran approval was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI.F-1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

Ambassador Thurston subsequently reported that the Salvadoran Minister for Foreign Affairs has reported having addressed a note to the Spanish Minister there in support of proposed exchange negotiations with Germany and with respect to the protection in the interim of all persons holding passports issued in the name of El Salvador. The Spanish Minister is said to have acknowledged receipt of this note, and Madrid has presumably been duly informed (Airgram No. A-186 from San Salvador dated May 3).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

HAITI

In replies to the Board's original circular airgram of January 26, Ambassador White in Haiti advised that a Committee of Aid for Refugees has been appointed by the Haitian Government. As a first contribution to the Committee, President Lescot is said to have turned over \$500, most of which represents the proceeds from a showing of a film of President Lescot's visit last fall to Canada, the United States, and Cuba. At its first meeting on February 7 the Committee is reported not only to have endorsed the objectives of this Government with respect to refugees, but also to have voted to obtain funds by a special state lottery for \$10,000 and by a special issue of five-centime postage stamps. It was reported that monies obtained in these ways would be devoted to refugee projects, perhaps through the United States War Relief Fund.

According to White, there are no restrictions upon the entry of Jews as such into Haiti. A few have settled there, and some have been successful in business. With respect to settling refugees in Haiti, White feels that in view of the low cost and abundance of labor and the existence of considerable unemployment in the towns, the evacuation to Haiti of refugees without some capital of their own "would be most unfortunate. Further, the Haitian budget is so limited that it would be unfair to charge it with sums for refugee support, apart from what President Lescot may be able to raise by outside means" (Dispatches No. 2521, dated January 31 and 2559 from Port-au-Prince dated February 10).

In a subsequent message to White the Board asked the Ambassador to convey to President Lescot the Board's satisfaction upon learning of his plans. The Board indicated that, while it is aware of the limited possibilities in Haiti for evacuations to that country, nevertheless it is hopeful that at least a small number of refugees can be absorbed by that Republic (Cable No. 104 to Port-au-Prince dated March 27).

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Charge d'Affaires Chapin subsequently reported that a formal reply was received from President Lescot with respect to Haitian cooperation in war refugee matters. Lescot pointed out that, contrary to previous reports, it was his intention that Haiti's contribution - in the form of profits from the state lottery - be made available to the National War Fund, United Nations Relief Wing, rather than to the War Refugee Board. Lescot indicated, however, that the Haitian Government is now looking into the possibility of organizing through the state lottery a special drawing, from which all profits would be turned over to the Board (Dispatch No. 2710 from Port-au-Prince dated April 3).

The Board subsequently asked that Ambassador White approach the Haitian Government in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports and consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Haitian approval was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

According to Embassy reports, the Haitian Foreign Minister, when approached, took a negative position with respect to acknowledgment by the Haitian Government of the validity of passports issued in the name of that country. Blanket approval of outstanding documents, it was contended, might prejudice later bona fide cases (Airgrams No. A-244 and A-248 from Port-au-Prince dated May 3 and 4).

As a result of repeated representations, however, the Haitian Minister for Foreign Affairs proposed that this Government transmit to the Spanish Government, in support of U. S. representations, a request that the Germans in turn be asked to accord all persons holding Haitian passports the rights of Haitian nationals until the receipt from the Haitian Government of a report on the validity of the passports in question (Airgram No. A-286 from Port-au-Prince dated May 24).

In response to this report, the Board has indicated that since Switzerland is the protecting power of Haitian interests in enemy territory, the Haitian approach should be made through Switzerland rather than through Spain.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

HONDURAS

The U. S. Embassy in Honduras has reported to the Board that the immigration of Jews into Honduras is not encouraged because of previous experiences with Negros, Syrians, and other "incompatible" groups. The Embassy indicated that it preferred to make no official requests to the Honduran Government pending clarification of State's airgram of January 26, particularly as to the extent to which the United States expects to admit refugees, how much is expected in the way of financial outlay, and just what cooperation is sought (Airgram No. A-38 dated February 1).

A circular airgram dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Honduras and other Latin American countries partially answered these queries. In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, these governments were acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

The U. S. Embassy in Honduras in turn reported that the matter had been discussed with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who appeared to be sympathetic to the suggestion. Consul Faust indicated his belief that the Honduran Government could probably be persuaded to accept a few refugee children on the basis of an adequate financial guarantee (Airgram No. A-163 from Tegucigalpa dated April 25).

In a subsequent communication from Honduras the Board was advised that President Carias appeared willing for Honduras to receive a maximum of 50 children. Acceptance of these children would be on condition that all transportation and maintenance expenses would be met by other

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than Honduran agencies. Inasmuch as Honduras has no diplomatic or consular representatives in Switzerland, the Board was requested to suggest some practicable form of visa procedure. Clarification was also requested as to whether the children would be expected to remain in Honduras or would be returned to their countries of origin after the war (Airgram No. A-165 from Tegucigalpa dated April 27).

The Government of Honduras was also approached, through the U. S. Mission there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. At the same time Honduran support was to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

In response to this approach the Honduran Government promised full cooperation in connection with the projected exchange. Honduras also agreed to approach the Germans, through the protecting power, with a demand that the rights of internees holding Honduran passports or claiming citizenship on the basis of consular documents be respected (Cable No. 127 from Tegucigalpa dated April 25; see attachment #10 to VI F - 1).

In the course of conversations leading to these decisions, the Honduran Minister for Foreign Affairs is said to have indicated that while no inquiries concerning the validity of passports had been received from the Spanish Government, he proposed to ignore any such inquiries as might later be received (Cable No. 127 from Tegucigalpa dated April 26). Since the Board believes that ignoring such inquiries might lead Spain to give Germany misleading information with respect to the Honduran attitude, Ambassador Frost has been requested to suggest that in case of inquiries by Spain, the Spanish Minister should be informed of the substance of the Honduran notes to this Government on the matter (Airgram No. A-100 to Tegucigalpa dated May 9).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

MEXICO

Ambassador Messersmith, in outlining the possible Mexican attitude with respect to the rescue and relief of refugees, reported to the Board the substance of certain discussions with a spokesman for the Mexican Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Dispatches No. 15,781 and 16,011 from Mexico City dated February 8 and February 18). So far as the question of Mexican hospitality to Jews is concerned, Messersmith reported that there is no particular problem there, Mexico having afforded refuge to large numbers of refugees without question, as to their religion. Messersmith felt, however, that while Mexico is entirely in sympathy with its proposed activities, it probably would be unable to take any active part in the transportation of refugees to this continent to assume any responsibility for the maintenance of such refugees in Mexico. Messersmith pointed out in this connection that Mexico is already affording hospitality to large groups of Spanish refugees, as well as to large numbers of other refugees from Europe, many of them Jews, in addition to cooperating in the settlement in Mexico of approximately 1500 Polish refugees. It was also remarked that Mexico is stinting herself in order to make her financial contribution to UNRRA, despite the fact that large sections of the Mexican population are themselves in an impoverished condition.

A subsequent report from Messersmith stated that he had learned through the Polish Minister that 489 Polish refugees are soon to be brought to Mexico from India. Messersmith repeated his previous recommendation that no more refugees be brought to Mexico (Cable No. 506 from Mexico City dated April 1).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Mexico and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar

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assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

Ambassador Messersmith in turn reported from Mexico City that in order to secure anything like a favorable reception toward the suggestion that Mexico give such guarantees to the Swiss Government, "it will be necessary to prepare the ground carefully in the Mexican Government and among the highest officials." Messersmith indicated his feeling that no immediate reaction from the Mexican Government could be expected on this matter (unnumbered airgram from Mexico City dated April 25).

In a later dispatch Messersmith reported that, as of April 27, no official reply had yet been received from the Mexican Foreign Office in response to the Embassy's memorandum of March 24, soliciting, in general terms, Mexican cooperation in war refugee matters. Messersmith again indicated his reluctance to approach the Mexican Government with a request for affirmative collaboration beyond the issuance of a general declaration on refugee policy.

With respect to the Board's efforts to induce the various Latin American countries to guarantee visas for child refugees, Messersmith stated that he had not approached the Mexican Government because he feared that the answer to such a proposal "made in this way at this time" would be negative. Messersmith based this fear on an informal conversation with the Minister of Foreign Relations, on the financial straits in which the Mexican Government was said to be at the moment, and on what was described as personal knowledge of the lack of facilities for the accommodation of such children.

Messersmith concluded with the observation that "so far as refugees are concerned, the Mexican Government is not in a position to collaborate for the present" and reiterated his belief that it would be inadvisable to urge any specific measures on Mexico (Dispatch No. 17,235 from Mexico City dated April 27).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

NICARAGUA

The Nicaraguan Government, according to a report to the Board from Charge d'Affaires Finley of the U. S. Embassy in Nicaragua, has indicated that "it will permit the entry of war refugees under the same conditions as the United States and in a number proportionate to the population of both countries" (Airgram No. A-85 from Managua dated February 25).

In a later communication Finley advised that while no doubts are entertained there as to the sincerity of the Nicaraguan Government's offer with respect to refugees, under the conditions named, technical difficulties could well prevent the arrival of any considerable number of such persons in Nicaragua. After discussing this subject further with the Nicaraguan Foreign Office, Finley advised that information would be needed regarding the practical steps envisaged by the Board to put this Government's policy into effect, including data regarding the probable number of persons to be received by the United States, transportation facilities available, the time of the expected evacuations, the nationality of the refugees, etc. With reference to the probability of the Nicaraguan Government's issuing a public statement on the subject, Finley reported -- admittedly without having explored the situation -- that embarrassment might result from requesting that such a statement be made. A recent anti-Semitic incident, as the result of which a Palestinian Jew allegedly assaulted an Axis Sympathizer, had been roundly debated in the Nicaraguan press and, as a result, anti-Jewish sentiments were reportedly aroused. It was suggested that because of the peculiar construction which might be placed upon any official declaration at this time, requesting such a statement would have little chance of success (Dispatch No. 2043 from Managua dated March 6).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Nicaragua and

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other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

The U. S. Embassy in Managua subsequently advised the Board that as a result of the representations made, the Nicaraguan Consul in Bern was authorized by his Government to grant visas to 100 refugee children, without regard for nationality or religion, and to keep these visas valid until transportation to Nicaragua becomes available (Cable No. 271 from Managua dated May 5).

The Board also asked that the Government of Nicaragua be approached, through the U. S. Mission there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Nicaraguan approval was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

The Board was subsequently advised of a statement by the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister to the effect that between 125 and 150 persons in occupied Europe are believed to have obtained Nicaraguan passports fraudulently. It was also reported that the practice of the Nicaraguan Government had generally been to decline to confirm the validity of such travel documents when questions were asked by the German Government through the protecting power. The Foreign Minister was reported to have agreed, however, to discuss with the President of Nicaragua the feasibility of approaching the Germans through the Swiss with a request that the interests of all bearers of Nicaraguan passports be safeguarded. The Foreign Minister is said to have expressed his belief that the President would agree to such an approach. With respect to exchange possibilities, it was indicated that inasmuch as Nicaragua would not be obligated physically to admit any of the holders of such travel documents, the Nicaraguan President would also probably support this Government's negotiations for such an exchange (Dispatch No. 2137 from Managua dated April 17).

According to a subsequent airgram from the U. S. Embassy in Managua, the Nicaraguan Foreign Office has listed certain of its nationals to whom

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it proposes that priority be granted in any exchange of holders of Latin American documents that may be arranged. It was also indicated that Nicaragua has now consented to support the exchange of other internees in occupied Europe, presumably on the basis of this Government's assurances that these persons will not actually reach Nicaragua (Airgram No. A-200 from Managua dated May 9).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

PANAMA

The Panamanian Government is reported by the U. S. Embassy there to have experienced considerable difficulty with Jewish refugees previously admitted because of the competition with established businesses, and both the people and the Government are reported to be unsympathetic to a request to take on any more at this time. At present a strict decree bars refugees from all enemy or enemy-occupied territory. Charge d'Affaires Muccio suggested the likelihood that only persons capable of and agreeable to the opening of new agricultural territory would be acceptable; he felt that it would be impolitic to exert pressure for any other concessions at this time (Dispatch No. 5133 dated February 4).

A memorandum from the Panamanian Foreign Office was subsequently transmitted by the Embassy in connection with the proposal that Panama cooperate with this Government in war refugee matters. In this memorandum the Ministry of Foreign Relations indicated that it would lend its "decided cooperation" to the realization of the principles represented in the Board's work (Dispatch No. 5166 from Panama dated February 12).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Panama and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

PARAGUAY

The U. S. Embassy in Paraguay was informed by the Paraguayan Government that it is anxious to accept such refugees as would be qualified to open up new agricultural lands, according to a report to the Board from Ambassador Frost (Airgram No. A-45 from Asuncion dated February 12). A later message stated that the colonization and immigration plans of Paraguay are in the hands of the Minister of Agriculture, who, in turn, has referred the problem to the Coordinator's Food Project, supervised by American experts. Definite recommendations are expected shortly, which will serve as a basis for Paraguay's position on the refugee problem (Airgram No. A-85 from Asuncion dated March 11).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Paraguay and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

The Board also asked that the Government of Paraguay be approached, through the U. S. Embassy there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Paraguayan support was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

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According to a report from the U. S. Embassy, the Paraguayan Foreign Minister stated informally that his Government would steadfastly recognize until after the war the validity of Paraguayan passports held by internees in Axis territory. The Paraguayan Minister was also reported to have taken a favorable attitude with respect to the projected exchange negotiations, although no formal affirmative decision was forthcoming in either respect (Airgram No. A-139 from Asuncion dated April 22).

Ambassador Frost later reported that the Paraguayan Foreign Minister had orally but officially confirmed the fact that his Government approves the proposed exchange negotiations (Airgram No. A-148 from Asuncion dated April 29).

Ambassador Frost subsequently reported that, according to the Paraguayan Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, a note was dispatched to the Spanish Charge d'Affaires at Asuncion for transmission to the German Government, admonishing the Germans to respect the rights of internees holding Paraguayan passports.

Frost also transmitted a copy of a note to the Paraguayan Foreign Office from the Polish Minister at Buenos Aires, requesting protection for 52 Polish Jews confined in Camp Vittel and for one confined at Camp Compiègne. This note stated that the persons in question need not necessarily be accepted for entry into Paraguay, since they hold Palestine certificates. The Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs was said to have indicated that, as in the case of the approaches previously made by the Board in this connection, Paraguay's position would be an affirmative one with respect to the Polish request (Dispatch No. 2052 from Asuncion dated May 5).

In another communication Frost advised the Board that the Paraguayan Foreign Minister is extremely anxious to obtain a reply concerning the possibility of including the proposed exchange two girls, native Paraguayan citizens residing in the province of Hannover, Germany, as well as certain Dutch nationals related to a prominent Paraguayan (Airgram No. A-185 from Asuncion dated May 20).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

PERU

A report has been received from Charge d'Affaires Butler of the U. S. Embassy in Peru with respect to the Peruvian attitude toward the rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution. Pending the receipt of a formal reply on refugee policy from the Peruvian Ministry for Foreign Affairs (which the Embassy expects to be non-committal or negative as well as delayed), the Board was advised that little assistance or real sympathy can be expected from Peru. According to report, the governing class in Peru fears Communism, dislikes Jews, and does not want to admit into the country any elements that might aggravate national, religious, or social problems. For all practical purposes, the Board was advised, Jewish refugees are not permitted entry into Peru. So far as is known, there is no restrictive policy operating against other non-Axis nationals, but in actual practice all applications for visas are closely scrutinized for security reasons. Moreover Peru reportedly gives no encouragement to the entry of political refugees, particularly Jews, its cooperation in this problem being limited to a routine participation in the activities of the Intergovernmental Committee.

A memorandum on the Jewish colony in Peru was also transmitted by the Embassy to the Board (Dispatch No. 9017 dated February 11).

The Embassy has since been informally advised by a Foreign Office official that the admissibility into Peru of war refugees has not changed since 1938, when the Peruvian Government informed the Intergovernmental Committee in London of the inability of Peru to absorb any refugees other than agriculturists (Dispatch No. 9203 from Lima dated March 10).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Peru and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Govern-

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ment (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

The Peruvian Foreign Minister subsequently requested information with respect to the nationalities included in the prospective child immigration (Cable No. 5441 from Lima dated April 24). In response to this inquiry the Board indicated its belief that, for the most part, Polish, French, Belgian, and stateless children of German and Austrian origin would be involved. The Board urged emphasis, however, upon the humanitarian aspect of the action suggested (Airgram No. A-330 to Lima dated May 1).

The Board has also asked that the Government of Peru be approached, through the U. S. Mission there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Peruvian support is also being sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the western hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

According to a report from the U. S. Embassy in Lima in this connection, the Peruvian Foreign Office has indicated that the Swiss Government some three months ago submitted a list of 48 persons interned in Axis countries and inquired as to whether Peru would honor Peruvian passports held by these internees. The Peruvian Government's reply was in the negative, as far as those 48 persons were concerned. In response to this Government's recommendation that in the future such passports be honored for humanitarian reasons, a Foreign Office spokesman is reported to have expressed sympathy with the suggestion (Airgram No. A-357 from Lima dated April 10).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

URUGUAY

The Uruguayan Government, while indicating its willingness to cooperate, stated in a note to the U. S. Embassy at Montevideo that it would prefer to have this country take the initiative and acquaint Uruguay with the nature of the program in connection with which her cooperation is sought. (Airgram No. A-96 dated February 22).

The Uruguayan Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs has since informed the Embassy that an officer of the Foreign Office has been directed to prepare a declaration of policy to be issued by the Uruguayan Government. It was expected that this statement would be similar to the declaration issued by the President upon the creation of the War Refugee Board. (See Airgram No. A-183 from Montevideo dated March 28.)

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Uruguay and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

The Board also asked that the Government of Uruguay be approached, through the U. S. Embassy there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Uruguayan approval was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

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In a cable from Montevideo the Board was subsequently informed that Uruguay has expressed its readiness to cooperate fully in passport recognition and in support of the proposed exchange of interness (Cable No. 457 from Montevideo dated May 17; see also Cable No. 427 from Montevideo dated May 6).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

VENEZUELA

The U. S. Embassy at Caracas reported to the Board that since 1937 the number of Jews entering Venezuela has been small and generally limited to persons having relatives or influential contacts there. Even transit visas for Jews are reported to have been discontinued. Applicants for visas of any kind are now said to be required to state race, religion, and nationality; if the applicant is Jewish or of Jewish origin the applications are denied (Dispatch No. 5464 from Caracas dated February 4).

In response to State's circular airgram, the Board was advised that the Venezuelan Government has expressed support of the idea inspiring the Board's creation. It was added that appropriate official organizations are studying the possibility of giving "concrete form" to the cooperation which Venezuela could render (Dispatch No. 5643 from Caracas dated March 16).

In April in connection with the reported deportation by the Germans of internees from Camp Vittel, the Venezuelan Government indicated its intention of cooperating fully with this Government in demanding that the rights of such internees holding Venezuelan passports or consular papers be respected, and in negotiating for an exchange against German nationals of all internees holding Latin American documentation (Airgram No. A-323 from Caracas dated April 15; see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and attachment #9 thereto).

Ambassador Corrigan in Caracas subsequently reported to the Board that the matter of requesting protection for the holders of passports issued in the name of Venezuela was taken up through the Swiss Government. A copy of the memorandum submitted by Venezuela in this connection was forwarded to the Board (Dispatch No. 5881 from Caracas dated May 9; see also Airgram No. A-381 from Caracas dated May 2 and Airgram No. A-245 to Caracas of the same date).

In a later communication Corrigan reported having again conferred with the Acting Foreign Minister and having urged further urgent representations by Venezuela in Madrid in support of representations made by the U. S. Embassy there (Airgram No. A-453 from Caracas dated May 20).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

BRAZIL

The Board has been advised by the U. S. Embassy at Rio de Janeiro that it has been assured by an official of the Brazilian Foreign Office that the refugee question is now under active discussion by the Minister of Justice and by the National Immigration Council. It was pointed out that, while there are many conflicting currents of public opinion with respect to permitting the entry of European refugees into Brazil, that country's policy in the past has been, in general, a liberal one. According to this report, the National Immigration Council at a recent meeting passed a resolution urging that the Brazilian Government consent to receive a group of 500 Jewish refugee children from France (Dispatches No. 14561 and 14890 from Rio dated February 12 and March 11).

In a communication to the U. S. Embassy in Rio the Board has asked that the Brazilian Government be informed of the authorization, by this Government to U. S. consular officers in Switzerland, of the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from enemy territory. The Embassy has been asked to approach the Brazilian Government and request that similar assurances be given to the Swiss Government with respect to Brazil's willingness to accept the 500 Jewish children whom the National Immigration Council had urged that Brazil admit, along with as many more refugee children as Brazil may find it possible to accept (Cable No. 1215 to Rio dated April 14; see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and attachment #3 thereto).

In this connection a report was received by the Board that Signor Juan Alberto, Minister of Economic Coordination, recently stated in a private interview that he believes that Brazil could reasonably undertake a progressive five-year program for the settlement of Jewish and other European refugees, beginning with 100,000 during the first year.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

GUATEMALA

In response to State's circular airgram of January 26 Ambassador Long advised the Board that little or nothing was being done officially in Guatemala toward the rescue and relief of persecuted elements in Europe, although since 1933 permission has been granted for some 800 to 1,000 refugees to enter Guatemala. The Guatemalan Government reportedly permits the entry of refugees for permanent residence where such refugees are able to obtain a guarantee of support from relatives already residents or nationals of the country; in some instances refugees have been able to gain entry for permanent residence without local sponsors. However, in all cases entry is granted only under the provisions 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. Alleged abuses of the entry privilege led to a government decree in March 1939, closing business establishments owned or operated by refugees and requiring the registration of business houses and the licensing of agents working on a commission basis.

Ambassador Long indicated his belief that if any representations are to be made to the Guatemalan Government with respect to the acceptance of refugees, the chances of success would be enhanced if any such proposal is presented in specific terms, particularly with respect to the number of persons proposed and their probable length of stay. (See Dispatch No. 1002 from Guatemala dated April 5.)

A circular airgram subsequently dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Guatemala and other Latin American countries partially satisfied this suggestion. In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, these governments were to be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

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Ambassador Long has since reported from Guatemala that the Guatemalan Government, in response to this proposal, agreed to accept from Switzerland up to 100 child refugees under the conditions outlined. It was indicated that Guatemala would prefer that, insofar as possible, these children be selected from among French and Belgian refugees (Dispatch No. 1104 from Guatemala dated May 15).

The Board also asked that the Guatemalan Government be approached, through the U. S. Missions there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Guatemalan support was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

Ambassador Long in turn reported that, following a confidential discussion with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, entire agreement was indicated with U. S. proposals in this respect. Long indicated that the Government of Switzerland, as the protecting power for Guatemalan citizens, would be requested by the Guatemalan Foreign Office to assert the rights granted to interned civilians in conformity with the Geneva Convention. The Foreign Office was also said to have indicated that if it should be suspected that any of the passports were incorrect, the Guatemalan Government would maintain its right to cancel or invalidate them, but that it would take such action only after the bearers had reached places of safety. Agreement to the proposed exchange negotiations was on the basis of the understanding that the bearers of such passports who are not desirable as immigrants to Guatemala would not be admitted there (Airgram No. A-229 from Guatemala dated May 8).

The Guatemalan Foreign Office subsequently requested the assistance of the U. S. Embassy there in transmitting to the Government of Switzerland, as the protecting power, its request that all persons in the Axis territory holding Guatemalan documents or claiming Guatemalan nationality be accorded the fullest protection and rights (Airgram No. A-250 from Guatemala dated May 19).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

CHILE

The U. S. Embassy at Santiago, in reply to State's circular airgram, reported that during 1939 Chilean consular officials are said to have waived legal requirements frequently in the case of immigrant refugees, allegedly for considerations in some instances. As a result, the immigration laws of that country are now quite rigidly enforced, according to this report, although the Minister of Foreign Affairs denies any discrimination against Jews. No definite statement as to future policy as it bears on the refugee problem was forthcoming.

A considerable number of victims of Nazi oppression, Jewish and otherwise, are said to have migrated to Chile in the past. Some latent anti-Semitism was reported to exist in Chile, springing from the fact that a large portion of the population is German or of German descent, and Nazi propaganda agents have been active among this element over a period of years. Some fear that immigrants of the refugee type would tend to concentrate in urban centers and upset local economy was also reported (Dispatch No. 9105 from Santiago dated March 11).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Chile and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

In a cable from Santiago the Board was subsequently advised that the Chilean Foreign Office has reported that consideration is being given to the suggestion that Chile guarantee visas for child refugees reaching Switzerland. A definite reply was promised as soon as the necessary study can be made (Cable No. 851 from Santiago dated May 16).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

COLOMBIA

The U. S. Embassy at Bogota, in response to State's circular airgram, reported that the Colombian Government has indicated a general willingness to cooperate in extending humanitarian assistance to European war refugees. According to a Foreign Office spokesman, no legal obstacles to immigration exist in Colombia at the present time other than ordinary wartime controls, but transportation difficulties have prevented any great number of refugees from reaching that country. Colombia's post-war policy is reportedly now under study, however, and plans are being drawn up to restrict immigration to persons fitting into the local economy. It is felt that any cooperation on refugee matters will be subject to the limitations imposed by this policy when definitely adopted (Dispatch No. 3321 from Bogota dated February 4).

In a later dispatch from the U. S. Embassy in Bogota the Board was advised that the Colombian Government had been approached with the suggestion that Colombia implement its cooperation in war refugee matters by issuing a declaration of policy similar to that issued by this Government. While a spokesman for the Colombian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was reported to have appeared sympathetic to this suggestion, he was noncommittal with respect to the proposal that instructions along the same lines be sent to Colombian diplomatic and consular officers abroad (Dispatch No. 3511 from Bogota dated March 27).

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Colombia and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D - 1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

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See also VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, for an account of certain notes bearing upon the protection and exchange of Latin American passport holders, which the Polish Minister in Colombia proposed to address to three American republics.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

COSTA RICA

In an effort to induce the Latin American republics to give assurances to Switzerland similar to those given by this Government through its instructions to U. S. consular officers there authorizing the issuance of up to 4,000 immigration visas to refugee children from Axis territory, a circular airgram was dispatched to the U. S. Missions in Costa Rica and other Latin American countries with the request that these governments be acquainted with the facts and asked to give similar assurances to the Swiss Government (see VI D-1, Evacuation of Abandoned Children from France, and the Circular Airgram dated April 15 comprising attachment #4 thereto).

The Board also asked that the Government of Costa Rica be approached, through the U. S. Missions there, in an endeavor to secure its agreement, on humanitarian grounds, to take no action until after the war to revoke, cancel, or otherwise impair the effectiveness of passports or consular papers held by Polish Jews and other persons now interned in enemy-occupied Europe. Costa Rican approval was also to be sought in connection with this Government's approach to the German Government, through appropriate channels, with a view to arranging an exchange against German nationals in the Western Hemisphere of internees holding Latin American passports and papers (see VI F - 1, Recognition of Latin American Passports, and the attachments thereto).

The Board was subsequently advised that the Costa Rican Minister for Foreign Affairs had indicated that it had been his original intention to declare a number of these passports invalid and to restrict the periods of validity of others. As a result of Board representations, however, the Minister is to have stated that he would be inclined to cooperate along the lines recommended in view of the humanitarian considerations involved (Dispatch No. 1279 from San Jose dated April 17).

(cont.)

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A later communication from the U. S. Embassy in San Jose indicated that the Costa Rican Government has now formally agreed to uphold the validity of all Costa Rican passports held by persons whose lives may otherwise be in danger. It was stated that such persons may also be declared eligible for exchange, on the understanding that Costa Rica will not be expected physically to admit them (Cable No. 304 from San Jose dated May 16). A copy of the note from the Foreign Office on this matter was subsequently forwarded (Dispatch No. 1400 from San Jose dated May 16).

The Board is now pressing for more specific action, namely, an approach by Costa Rica to the German Government through the protecting power along the lines previously suggested (Airgram No. A-229 to San Jose dated May 10).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN

ARGENTINA

In response to State's circular airgram of January 26 the U. S. Embassy at Buenos Aires reported that the consensus of persons active in Jewish rescue and relief work is that so long as the present regime remains in power, no assistance whatsoever can be expected from the Argentine Government in refugee matters. Certain Jewish organizations in Argentina are said to own large tracts of land which might easily support several thousand refugee families if there should come a radical change in the Argentine Government under which such immigrants could be admitted. Argentina itself is said to be capable of absorbing millions of immigrants, but "no conceivable political change would make possible the willing acceptance of a very large proportion of Jews among those proposed millions" (Dispatch No. 14,547 from Buenos Aires dated April 21).

In another communication from Buenos Aires the Board has been advised of the visit to the Embassy of a delegation from the Argentine Jewish Associations for the purpose of expressing their appreciation of the President's statement on atrocities against the Jews. Very favorable treatment of the President's statement in the news columns of La Prensa and La Nacion was also reported (Dispatch No. 14,357 from Buenos Aires dated April 3).

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Other Countries

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS; OTHER COUNTRIES

EGYPT

In response to the State Department's circular airgram of January 26, a report was received from Minister Kirk in Egypt (Airgram No. A-84 dated February 18) describing the refugee problem in that country. The government of Egypt is reported to have had a benevolent attitude toward the refugee problem in the Middle East, as evidenced by its permitting the entry of various groups of Poles, Greeks, Yugoslavs, sponsored by the Middle East Relief and Refugee Administration. Kirk reported that at one time the Egyptian Government also agreed to permit the entry of several thousand Greek refugee children; their evacuation from Greece, however, was balked by the Italian Government and it has not yet been possible to rescue them. In all these groups there were Jewish members. Nevertheless, the Government is reported to have made it clear that the sojourn of these refugees in Egypt was to be "in transit", although it has not reached the question of defining the period meant by this term.

In line with the Board's policy of bringing pressure to bear on satellite governments to desist from abetting persecutions, a request was dispatched to Kirk (Cable No. 37 dated March 7; see V B - 1, Approaches to the Satellites, and attachment # 2 thereto), as well as to other Missions, asking that certain information be relayed through such channels as were available to the Governments of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Hungary.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: OTHER COUNTRIES

ICELAND

In a report from Minister Morris (Airgram No. A-19 dated February 19) it is reported that there are "no Icelandic Jews" and no reason has ever existed for Iceland actually to encourage the entry of European Jews or other victims of enemy persecution into Iceland. In an informal discussion with the Icelandic Minister for foreign affairs, Kirk reports it was pointed out that Iceland was a country "of poor economic resources with a small homogenous population who had lived in a state of semi-exclusion from other Europeans for centuries. It, therefore, could not be expected that the Icelanders could quickly adjust themselves to a basically different viewpoint in respect to foreigners. On the other hand, he felt that there was no anti-Semitic feeling here and that Icelanders in common with other decent free people sympathized with and deplored the fate of Jewish and other victims of Nazi and Fascist mistreatment."

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: OTHER COUNTRIES

SAUDI - ARABIA

Minister Moose reports (Airgram No. A-10 dated February 16) that there are no Jews in Saudi-Arabia. According to this report, "The nature of the country, the nature of its inhabitants, the tenets of the prevailing religion (Islam) and the local adverse reaction to Zionism, combine to make it certain that no Jews will be permitted to enter Saudi-Arabia unless a special reason exists for doing so. Those same reasons make it unlikely that Jews will apply for admission into Saudi Arabia."

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: OTHER COUNTRIES

TANGIER

A report received from U.S. Consul Elbrick in Tangier in reply to State's circular airgram of January 26 indicated that since the Spanish occupation of Tangier in June 1940, no refugees have entered that area. It was reported that Spanish occupying authorities do not encourage or cooperate in any way either by permitting the entry of refugees or by aiding those who arrived prior to that date.

The Refugee Aid Committee of the Tangier Jewish community was reported to be assisting some 571 individuals with cash grants, clothing, food, and medicines. These operations are said to represent an expenditure of more than \$10,000 per month and are met entirely by remittances from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. A JDC representative is now said to be examining certain family groups and individuals who have evinced an interest in emigrating to Palestine; permission for a few to proceed to Canada is also anticipated (Airgram No. A - 48 from Tangier dated March 7).

According to a later communication from the U.S. Legation in Tangier, favorable consideration has been given by the High Commissioner there to the request of the Jewish communities of Tangier and Tetuan that 500 refugee children be permitted to go to Tangier temporarily from Hungary. The High Commissioner is said to have stated that since Madrid would have to make the final decision, the request was forwarded by him with a favorable recommendation. The important question, it was said, is not so much of a financial one as finding the necessary supplies in Tangier for the children (Cable No. 157 from Tangier dated June 2).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: OTHER COUNTRIES

ITALY

The Board received through the U. S. Embassy in Algiers a copy of a report concerning conditions of Jews in Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia prepared by the Displaced Persons Sub-Commission of the Allied Control Commission. This report stated that the Sub-Commission had handled approximately 3,000 Jews in liberated Italy. Among these were native Italian Jews who had been either released from internment or displaced from their normal places of residence by reason of military operations; refugees from Germany, Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia who reached Italy before or during the war; and refugees received recently from the Dalmatian Islands. These refugees were cared for in ex-internment camps at Ferramonti (Cosenza) and Palermo (Sicily), in camps at Bari and Naples, and in transit camps in Lecce Province.

Prior to the Allied landings, the Union of Jewish Committees, Delasem, with a central office in northern Italy, reportedly cared for Jewish immigrants. Contact with this organization, however, ended in October 1943. (See Dispatch No. 106 from Algiers dated February 11.)

In March James Saxon, Special Representative of the Board in North Africa, went to Bari in order to examine the Balkan refugee problem in Italy (Cable No. 1036 from Algiers dated March 29). Ackermann, the Board's Special Representative in the Mediterranean Area, later recommended that Saxon be recalled to Washington in order to report in detail on the refugee situation, particularly with respect to the possibilities of rescue operations in and through Partisan territory. Partisan representatives, according to Ackermann, claim to have done much already in this direction, but they are handicapped by lack of ships, supplies, and money. (See Cable No. 1173 from Algiers dated April 8.)

Certain recommendations of Saxon's were relayed to the Board in person by Michael Hoffman, Treasury representative returned from North Africa, through whom a written report from Saxon was also transmitted.

According to a report from Minister Harrison in Bern, efforts were afoot in northern Italy to raise the anti-Jewish campaign there to the same level of intensity as the German-inspired campaigns in Hungary, Slovakia, and other satellite countries (Cable No. 2677 from Bern dated April 27).

See also III A, Appointment of Special Representatives and VI E-7, Evacuations to and through Italy.

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: OTHER COUNTRIES

FINLAND

A preliminary report received from Minister Gullion in Helsinki indicates the cooperation that may be expected from Finland in carrying out Board objectives. At present, according to the report, there is no actual official discrimination against refugees in Finland. Although the entry of refugees is not encouraged by the Finnish Government, they are not turned back at the frontier. On the basis of informal discussions, Minister Gullion reported his belief that the Finnish Government would at this time "be strongly attracted by any opportunity to associate itself with Western democracies" and would in all probability issue a declaration with respect to its willingness to facilitate the movement of refugees. This statement would not, however, stigmatize the German (Cables No. 303 and 341 from Helsinki dated April 3 and 20).

In a cable to Helsinki the Board has indicated agreement with the U. S. Legation's suggestion that the political factors involved in connection with obtaining an official Finnish statement on war refugee matters outweigh any advantages that might accrue through the issuance of such a statement at this time.

With respect to the evacuation of minority groups in Finland whose lives would be endangered as a result of increased German influence, the Legation has been advised of the report from Minister Johnson in Stockholm that refuge would probably be extended by Sweden if the Finnish Government requested the Swedish Government to allow such entries on the grounds that the lives of the persons in question were in jeopardy in Finland. Accordingly, the Legation has been authorized to approach the Finnish Government in its discretion, in the event developments make it desirable to evacuate from Finland potential victims of the Gestapo (Cable No. 104 from Helsinki dated March 4).

As a result of Board representations, the Swedish Government has authorized the issuance of visas permitting the evacuation from Finland to Sweden of 100 threatened Jewish refugees from central Europe (see VI E - 6, Evacuation of Refugees from Finland).

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COOPERATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS: OTHER COUNTRIES

AFGHANISTAN

According to a report from the U. S. Legation in Afghanistan, there is little chance for any substantial number of refugees to be absorbed into the Afghan economy, nor is it likely that they be welcome in a fanatically Moslem country. Because of the primitive economy and low standard of living in Afghanistan, there is said to be practically no opportunity for Europeans in the fields of domestic commerce, agriculture, or the service trades. It was indicated, however, that since the Afghan Government has in the past welcomed the coming of qualified technicians and professional men, it is possible that a small number - perhaps fifty - such refugees and their dependents might be accepted in Afghanistan. It was suggested that if the names and qualifications of refugees proposed for settlement in that country were to be submitted, the Afghan Government would be approached by the Legation and the matter discussed with them. In this connection it was added that although Jews are "not popular" in Afghanistan, there has been no serious discrimination against them (Dispatch No. 405 from Kabul dated March 5).

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