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SOCIAL COUNCILCONSEIL  
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ET SOCIALE/AC.8/2  
14 September 1946

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

REPRESENTATIONS PREPARED BY THE SECRETARIAT  
CONCERNING RESETTLEMENT AND CERTAIN CLASSIFICATIONS  
OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

In connection with the suggestion made by the delegate for Lebanon that nations should be approached to determine their specific proposals regarding the acceptance and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons, it is desired to recall to delegates that two steps have been already taken in this matter:

(A) by UNRRA on 29 May 1946;

(B) by the Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons sitting from 8 April to 1 June 1946.

A. The Director-General of UNRRA referring to the UNRRA Council Session of 9 May 1946 asked in a letter to 48 nations, dated 29 May 1946, for specific proposals for the solution of the problem of non-repatriable persons.

Replies were received from 23 nations: they fall into three groups:

- Grp. I. (i) Australia stated that it would consider action in respect of displaced persons in the Pacific area.
- (ii) Canada stated it would take only first degree relatives of residents of Canada if their maintenance was maintained. Its long term immigration policy was stated to be under consideration.
- (iii) China seemed somewhat in doubt as to the purport of the letter. It was apparently unable to take any refugees, having itself many thousands. It made some suggestions however, as to what it thought other nations might do.
- (iv) Union of South Africa expressed its willingness to take 5,000 war orphans.
- (v) United Kingdom expressed its desire and intention of re-uniting families so far as possible by admitting to England certain relatives of persons already resident there.
- (vi) Panama stated it was willing to give the problem special attention, and

- (vii) U.S.A. expressed its willingness to discuss the matter with the UNRRA Secretary-General.

Grp. II. (i) Costa Rica and

(ii) El Salvador stated they were unable to take any refugees.

(iii) Iceland stated it had taken some Jewish refugees and, with the present problem of its own returning nationals, felt it had done its full share in this matter.

(iv) India had no suggestions to offer; and

(v) New Zealand stated it did not approve mass immigration and was pre-occupied with the problem of its own returning soldiers and the acute housing shortage.

Grp. III. (i) Cuba (ii) Denmark (iii) Dominican Republic (iv) Egypt

(v) Mexico (vi) Netherlands (vii) Nicaragua (viii) Poland

(ix) Turkey, and (x) Uruguay (xi) Venezuela formally acknowledged the letter.

No replies were received from the other addressees.

B. Secondly; I wish to remind the Council also of the steps which have already been taken by the Special Committee on Refugees and Displaced Persons concerning reception possibilities in various countries, a record of which is contained in Document E/Ref/75. The twenty countries represented on the Special Committee were asked to submit statements as to the numbers of refugees and displaced persons which they would be prepared to accept as immigrants and answers were received from viz: Australia, Brazil, New Zealand, Dominican Republic, United States of America, Colombia, Peru and Canada. These statements may be summarized as follows:

Australia: The Australian Government have decided to embark on a vigorous immigration policy, providing for the absorption of 70,000 persons a year. It cannot, however, at the moment specify the proportion of refugees and displaced persons to be included in this figure. In any event, owing to transport difficulties, it will be upwards perhaps of two years before non-British immigration will be able to make a start.



Brazil: Brazil wishes to receive on her territory a large number of refugees and displaced persons. The exact number has not yet been fixed but will possibly be between 100,000 and 200,000.

New Zealand: In immigration into this Dominion, emphasis has always been placed on the individual. The Government will be unable to state the number of refugees that it will be in a position to receive, until precise information is available as to the nationality, age, sex and occupation of those who desire to settle there. The possibilities of immigration are at present handicapped by the transport problem and the housing shortage, and it will be at least two years before refugees from Europe can be accepted.

Dominican Republic: The Dominican Republic is willing to admit refugees and its Delegation brought to the Committee's attention the terms of an agreement dated 10 January 1940, for the rehabilitation of stateless and homeless refugees. This agreement provides for approximately 500 families of settlers as a first contingent and subsequently up to perhaps 100,000 immigrants.

United States: Under the present immigration law 3900 visas can be issued each month to persons who are natives of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, two-thirds of which (2600) are allotted to Germany. Since the operation of so many consular establishments was suspended when war came it has been decided to concentrate on the American zones of occupation in Europe.

Colombia: The Colombian Government is prepared to welcome, subject to certain conditions, a steady flow of immigrants engaged in activities connected with the production of wealth, such as industrial technicians, mechanics, fishermen, mariners, industrialists and domestic workers, who would have great prospects of success in this country.

Peru: The Peruvian delegation informed the Special Committee that its Government would carefully and sympathetically study the question of receiving persons for whom no other arrangements could be made and would forward information on this subject.

Canada:\* Immigration to Canada is at present restricted to British subjects who fall within certain categories. As soon as demobilization and post-war employment of service men and their families has been completed, the Canadian Parliament should be in a position, if it so desires, to consider and formulate a new immigration policy.

From later enquiry certain of these replies are no longer entirely appropriate:

Australia following the Hayden report of 6 April 1946 to the Commonwealth of Australia Parliament was reported to:

- (a) to re-establish its returned soldiers
- (b) to admit at its own costs British returned soldiers and their wives and families
- (c) to assist by a contribution to their passage-money British civilian immigrants
- (d) after these initial priorities to do whatever could be done to assist other groups.

Brazil has modified the proposition that it could take, unconditionally, a number anywhere near so great as that mentioned.

Peru - the Delegate of - stated during the address of Mr. La Guardia before this session that Peru would do all that was possible to assist the refugees and displaced persons.

As regards USA, Mr. La Guardia stated during his address that the matter was still under discussion.

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\* After the document was read the Canadian Delegate drew the attention to the fact that a corrigendum had been issued to the initial paper (document E/Ref/75/Corr.1), which contained a more accurate explanation of Canada's immigration policy.

The paragraph after the word "Canada" should therefore read as follows:

Immigration to Canada is at present restricted to British, United States and certain other nationals, who fall within certain categories. For the moment the formulation of a new immigration policy is being deferred until provision is made for the return to civilian life and the re-employment of Canadian ex-servicemen. As soon as this movement has been completed, the Canadian Parliament should be in a position if it so desires, to consider and formulate a new long-term immigration policy.

C. With regard to the request by the delegate for Peru that there should be an analysis made of all displaced persons in the Western European area to show sex, age, and occupational capacity, it is desired to state that there already exists a very elaborate sample analysis by UNRRA dated 2 July 1946, projected out to give as clear a figure as possible for the whole of western Germany, Austria, Italy.

This is available and provides information entirely adequate for any immediate purpose that could be contemplated by a potential receiver nation. Moreover, so far as sex and age are concerned, complete figures exist for every assembly centre under UNRRA control and are kept up to date.

An absolute registration of occupational capacity was commenced in western Germany in April 1946, and though it is not yet complete, has progressed to such a degree that it now includes a large proportion of all persons in western Germany. Such an occupational registration has now been completed for Austria and Italy.

These particulars refer to some two-thirds of accessible displaced persons nearly 800,000 and provide already ample information for any government desiring to take action below that number.

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