UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

March 8, 1962

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ENTITLED.... American Attitudes Toward the Displaced Persons

in the Era of World War II.

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences

Instructor in Charge

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF Political Science
AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD THE
DISPLACED PERSONS
IN THE
ERA OF WORLD WAR II
BY
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THESIS
FOR THE
DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS
IN LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA, ILLINOIS
1982
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Amy Zahl Gottlieb - Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs - University of Illinois for her valuable time, encouragement, constructive criticism and supervision.

I would also like to thank Dr. Richard Merritt - Head of the Department of Political Science - University of Illinois for his assistance in the production of this work.
"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden shore"

Emma Lazarus

"Almost every disgruntled element that got into trouble in its own country has pleaded for admission into the United States on the ground that they were oppressed at home."

Rep. John E. Rankin
Mississippi
I. INTRODUCTION

This thesis will analyze the policies of United States Government officials and the attitudes of the American Public related to the displaced persons in Europe during the years 1933-1952.

In so doing, the paper will review the background of the situation, and then more critically analyze the years both during and after the war, with regard to the Congress, Presidents, Executive Departments, and citizens of the United States.
II. BACKGROUND
THE UNITED STATES AND THE WEST IN THE REFUGEE CRISIS: 1933-1939

In order to understand how the problems of displaced persons in Europe were handled, one must have some background information as to the history of the problem. This would include a brief discussion of the actions of the United States with regard to refugees up to the outbreak of the Second World War.

The outbreak of the war was, of course, provoked by Germany. With the rise of Nazism in that country, refugees were created almost overnight before the war even started. From 1933 on, laws were created in Germany which forced certain people, particularly Jewish people, out of German society.

"On January 30, 1933, Hitler was named Chancellor... by the beginning of February the Hitler government had banned all Communist meetings and shut down the Communist press. Social Democrat rallies were either forbidden... or broken up and leading Socialist newspapers were continually suspended. Even the Catholic Center Party did not escape the Nazi terror...."1

Of course, the Jewish citizens of Germany were the ones that would suffer the most in Germany during this period.

"To Hitler, as he had publicly declared a thousand times, the Jews were not Germans, and though he did not exterminate them at once (only a relative few thousand were robbed, beaten or murdered during the first months), he issued laws excluding them from public service, the universities and the professions. And on April 1, 1933, he proclaimed a national boycott of Jewish shops."2

This was only the beginning of the persecution of the Jews in Germany,
"the so-called Nuremberg Laws of September 15, 1935, deprived the Jews of German citizenship, confining them to the status of 'subjects'. It also forbade marriage between Jews and Aryans as well as extramarital relations between them, and it prohibited Jews from employing female Aryan servants under thirty-five years of age. In the next few years some thirteen decrees supplementing the Nuremberg Laws would outlaw the Jew completely."^3

This elimination of people from German society resulted in the first tricklings of a refugee problem in Europe. People left Germany while they could and fled elsewhere. Others were forcefully deported from the country and refused admission elsewhere. In 1938, "ten thousand Jews had been deported to Poland in boxcars."^4 They were denied admission into Poland upon their arrival and were left on the Polish border. After the Anschluss which incorporated Austria into Greater Germany, life became exceedingly difficult for Austria's Jews, most of whom resided in Vienna. These people also contributed to the migration problem.

"By 1939, according to the German census, apparently 280,000 Jews had already migrated, and some 12,000 were reported as being in concentration camps. In addition, 130,000 Jewish refugees fled from Austria following the Anschluss of 12 March 1938, and another 17,000 escaped from the Sudetenland following its annexation by Germany on 1 October 1938. These Jews and perhaps 5,000 more who fled from Danzig and Memel at the time of annexation, brought the total for pre-war Jewish refugees from Greater Germany to 420,000 persons. This total, when deducted from the 1,152,000 European refugees reported as having arrived in some thirty countries during 1933-39, minus approximately 330,000 refugee Republican Spaniards who migrated to France, gives a total of 382,000 non-Jewish refugees from Greater Germany during the period from 1933-1939."^5

While all of this migration was occurring, the rest of the world stood by and did absolutely nothing to help the people who
were fleeing from persecution. The United States was just as guilty as the rest of the world. Although President Roosevelt tried to ease immigration regulations somewhat, allowing the number of refugees coming in to increase slightly, no plan for action on the refugee problem was undertaken by the United States until 1938. This was five full years after Germany began officially persecuting many of its citizens.

Between 1933 and 1939, the United States admitted only "136,900 refugees of the total number of 1,151,625 pre-war refugees who fled several European countries."

The reason for this was that the United States retained the quota system and no successful programs were put into use to aid the refugees of Europe. As the New York Times stated on March 26, 1938, "Mr. Roosevelt made it clear that in extending the helping hand to the oppressed of other lands, this country had no intention of enlarging or revising its immigration quotas."

Unfortunately, operation under the normal quota system could not possibly have done anything to relieve or aid the situation which was progressively getting worse. Newspapers across the nation carried statements by anti-immigration groups almost daily. Many of these organizations asked for a ban on immigration altogether. For example, the New York Times stated on October 20, 1938 that, "stopping immigration 'from whatever source' until the present unemployment crisis abates was urged in a resolution adopted yesterday...by the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States...." This group was only one of many to urge bans on immigration. "The Patriotic and Fraternal Junior Order United American Mechanics, restrictionist since 1853, saw each new (refugee)
arrival as 'an added threat to the ultimate solving of the economic situation in the United States.'"9

The question of refugee immigration and unemployment came up in 1937 and 1938 after Roosevelt had eased up on previously strict immigration regulations in order to try and help some of the German refugees. In the decade before, an anti-immigration sentiment went through the nation and the restrictionist immigration policies were enacted. With Roosevelt's attempted aid, the restrictionists felt they were losing their hold on these policies.

"Veterans of the anti-immigration struggle of the 1920's and after seized the occasion to press for a total stoppage of admission of foreigners. People who had formerly paid little heed to the restrictionists' viewpoints were now ready for their message. In a milieu of insecurity born of nearly a decade of depression, urban lower- and lower-middle class elements were especially prone to fear and resentment toward newcomers. Particularly in New York City, the main area of refugee penetration, strong feeling developed against the refugee as a job competitor."10

As stated previously, until 1938 the United States made no attempts to alleviate the refugee crisis. In light of the situation with regard to public sentiment against immigration, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made an attempt to put together a program to aid the refugees.

"On March 24, 1938, the State Department announced that it had sent notes to twenty-nine European and South American countries asking them to participate in an international conference on German refugees. Since the United States had not taken part in any of the previous international efforts to solve the problem, the new proposal greatly raised the hopes of those sympathetic to the refugees."11

Many comments about the conference have been made. Most of
them deal with the fact that the conference was a failure. Henry Feingold, Assistant Professor of History at the City University of New York stated, "the invitation was astonishing because Roosevelt chose to intrude into a situation in which he was virtually powerless to act, barred as he was by a highly restrictive immigration law." Roosevelt knew from the start that bringing refugees into the United States under existing law would be impossible. Any analysis of his statements when the conference was announced should make it obvious that Roosevelt had no intentions of making any attempt to get Congress to relax the laws or find some way to go around them. With the announcement of the conference, "the State Department made it clear that the contemplated program envisioned no changes in immigration policy. 'Furthermore, it should be understood,' ran the text of the notes, 'that no country would be expected or asked to receive a greater number of immigrants than is permitted by its existing legislation.'"

Although there was some opposition by certain groups, especially "fraternal" societies to the conference, "the President's actions to facilitate migration of persecuted people seemingly drew a very positive response. General press coverage was heavy and almost wholly favorable."

With this generally positive public response, why were there no attempts made to ease immigration law? Furthermore, why would any nation want to participate in a conference that, due to the existing laws could not do much about the refugee problem? Professor Herbert Druks of Brooklyn College suggests that, "the states participating at Evian...had accepted invitations only because they did not wish to appear before international opinion
as completely standing aside,' and that the U.S. was no better since its quotas were such that 'little possible action' could be expected". Germany continued to persecute, the United States and other nations continued to watch.

Of course, the Congress was just as responsible as anyone else for the failure of the conference due to the immigration laws. From the time President Roosevelt made the announcement about the Evian Conference on, the Congressional Record shows an almost constant anti-immigration discourse. The theme of "Let's Save America for the Americans" is repeated constantly. For example, House Representative Rankin of Mississippi stated, "we cannot afford to throw down the bars of immigration, or open wide our gates to every disgruntled element throughout the world. Instead of inviting more aliens to add to our troubles, I would much prefer to see us deport a great many who are here now.... Almost every disgruntled element that got into trouble in its own country has pleaded for admission into the United States on the ground that they were oppressed at home.... I am not now in favor of making my country the dumping ground for the riff-raff of the Old World.... As members of Congress representing the American people, we should carry out that policy (of restricting immigration) and save America for Americans". Applause followed this comment.

Of course, this was not the only outrageous remark that shot across the House floor at the time. Representative Jenkins of Ohio stated, "our President seems bound to embroil us in European entanglements. He now is asking the people of the United States to make a haven here for those who are undesirable to human dictators.... When he gave out to the nations of Europe the startling invitation to participate with him in removing from Europe these thousands of political refugees he launched on a program unprecedented in our history.... It would be much better for us to take these people to some uncongested part of the world".
Before the Evian Conference began in July, 1938, President Roosevelt had made plans for the conference. His plan was "to have the participating states, supported by private funds provide asylum to the refugees according to existing immigration restrictions and quotas.... He invited some leading American figures to a White House conference, called to find funds for future settlement projects. It was then that a President's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees was organized." This committee had met before the conference and attempted to discuss methods of action to be brought up at the conference. Unfortunately, nothing workable came up. For example, "Rabbi Stephen S. Wise made a suggestion that Britain be urged to liberalize its Palestine Policy. The Committee insisted that the Palestine question would 'stir up bitter passions and might even lead to disruption of the entire conference'." And so, this question, like many others were never brought before the conference.

On July 6, 1938, the conference opened. Myron C. Taylor, former Chairman of the Board of United States Steel "had agreed to serve as chief representative for the United States.... In the opening speech, he stated that the United States contribution lay in making the German-Austrian quota of 27,730 fully available. As the session proceeded, delegate after delegate excused his country from any increased acceptance of refugees".

The only country which made any substantial offer was the Dominican Republic which "volunteered to contribute large, but unspecified areas for agricultural development." The gist of the conference was summed up quite well in an article from Newsweek,
"Chairman Taylor opened proceedings: 'The time has come when governments...must act and act promptly.' Most governments represented acted promptly by slamming their doors against Jewish refugees.... Only Mexico and the Dominican Republic promised havens with no restrictions attached."22

Unfortunately, the Dominican Republic's substantial offer of admission to 100,000 German-Jewish refugees never amounted to much.

"On July 9, 1938, Virgilio Trujillo-Molina delighted the weary delegates by announcing his government's willingness to accept 100,000 refugees...."23 These refugees were supposed to be agriculturalists.

"Hailed as a major breakthrough in the refugee question by Roosevelt, the Dominican offer was little more than an empty gesture by a self-seeking despot. The Trujillo regime received a good deal of favorable publicity as a result of its announcement, but it never intended to really succor the desperate Jews of Germany. It is doubtful whether more than a handful of the 600,000 highly urbanised Jews of Austria-Germany could have satisfied the entry requirement of 'agriculturalists with an impeachable record'.... By the end of 1941 the Dominican Republic Settlement Corporation, chartered in October, 1939 with Washington's approval placed a mere 500 Jewish families in what was formerly Santo Domingo"24

"The one solid accomplishment of the Evian Conference was the establishment of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees as a permanent organization."25 "The primary task of the new agency would be twofold. It would undertake a search for resettlement havens and would seek to negotiate with Berlin over the refugees."26 Unfortunately, this "solid accomplishment" would amount to nothing but empty words and wasted breath over the next few months which remained until the war broke out.

The first problem encountered by George Rublee, who had been appointed as director of the Committee, was to establish communications with Germany.
"Instituting negotiations with Germany for a policy of orderly emigration of refugees with part of their capital, encountered four months of delay. The initial obstacle was inability to assemble the five officers of the I.G.C.R. for the first planning meeting with Rublee. Great Britain, the United States, and the Netherlands were willing to commit themselves to the program...at least to the extent of naming permanent representatives. France and Brazil, the other nations expected to send officials, were not. After a week's hesitation, France relented. On August 31 the officers met with Rublee despite the absence of the Brazilian delegate."

In less than twenty-four hours after the initial meeting, the Intergovernmental Committee began to fall apart.

"On September 1,... Brazil resigned its seat. The next day Argentina barred all further immigration, arguing that it had a higher percentage of Jews than any other nation. On September 13, Chile...formally withdrew from the I.G.C.R. Within two weeks, the three most industrialized Latin American nations renounced all interest in refugee matters... From London, Rublee wrote Cordell Hull that fall:'With the exception of the United States and the United Kingdom, doors have been systematically closed everywhere to involuntary emigrants since the meeting at Evian.'"

Numerous problems were encountered with proceeding any further because of the British. The first involved the problem of leadership which was settled when Earl Winterton was appointed Chairman of the Committee. Next to get in the way of negotiations was the problem of establishing communications with Germany. The problem seemed to stem from the British who were busy with their policy of appeasement and did not want anyone interfering with it. The British were responsible for getting through to Germany and arranging the talks. As George Rublee stated, "to put it bluntly, I have no indication that the Germans are reluctant to talk. It is apparent to me, however, that the British are reluctant to have me talk with the Germans."

Neville
Chamberlain was too busy running around Germany appeasing Hitler to let anyone talk to the Germans about refugees. The crisis of the Sudetenland had given the British an excuse to avoid arranging the negotiations. The month of September was occupied by the "meeting at Berchtesgaden...where Chamberlain gave Hitler the Sudeten area...and then the Munich Conference of September 29 where Hitler, Mussolini, Daladier and Chamberlain decided to officially withdraw support from Czechoslovakia and hand it over to Germany". 30

The policy of appeasement seemed to be relaxed a bit after Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass) which had resulted in public opinion beginning to discredit Chamberlain's policy. On November 10, 1938, the Germans pulled off the biggest pogrom against the Jews yet. Aside from the destruction, death and torture which was inflicted on the Jews in this government-sponsored and organized pogrom, Jews were now completely cut-out of German life. Worldwide public opinion turned against Germany, who was struggling to keep economic ties open with several nations including Britain.

Up to this point, Myron C. Taylor had been unable to arrange for negotiations with the Germans himself. In light of world sentiment against Germany, on "the morning of December 15, 1938, the American Charge d'Affairs in England notified Washington that Hjalmar Schacht, president of the Reichsbank and minister without portfolio in the Nazi Cabinet was to visit London to discuss the Jewish problem...with several British experts attached to the League Commission on Refugees.... Rublee was invited to join the discussion". 31

Before discussing the negotiations with Germany, it is important to take a few moments and discuss President Roosevelt's
reaction to the events in Europe at that time.

At the President's press conference of Tuesday, November 15, 1933, he made the following statement in regard to the situation in Germany: "News of the past few days in Germany has deeply shocked public opinion in the United States... I myself could scarcely believe that such things could occur in a twentieth-century civilization. With a view to gaining a first-hand picture of the current situation in Germany, I asked the Secretary of State to order our Ambassador in Berlin to return at once for report and consultation." 32

The President was shocked about the treatment of the Jews in Germany, but did he take any action at that time to help them? At the same press conference a reporter invoked the following discourse:

"Question: 'Have you made any protest to Germany?'
The President: 'Nothing has gone that I know of.'

Question: 'Mr. President, can you tell us whether you feel that there is any place in the world where you could take care of mass emigration of the Jews from Germany -- have you given thought to that?'
The President: 'I have given a great deal of thought to it.'

Question: 'Can you tell us any place particularly desirable?'
The President: 'No, the time is not ripe for that.'

Question: 'Would you recommend a relaxation of our immigration restrictions so that the Jewish refugees could be received in this country?'
The President: 'That is not in contemplation, we have the quota system.'" 34

The President could have at least attempted to pressure the British into opening up Palestine, but he did not. Furthermore, he made no appeals to Congress to ease immigration restrictions.
However, three days later he stated that refugees from Germany and Austria that were here on visitor's permits would be allowed to stay in this country "under the six month extension provision". Roosevelt granted renewal of the extensions in the "interests of humanity," as he put it, so that these refugees were not sent back to Europe.

The negotiations with Germany began on December 15, 1938. Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, arrived in London with a proposal for the emigration of Jews from Germany. Much speculation has been given as to the cause of Germany's sudden decision to negotiate. The most likely reason is that Germany was economically choking due to boycotts invoked by the Western Democracies. This is also the reason that the plan proposed by Schacht was based on economics. At the outset of discussion there was left one large question to be answered. Where would the refugees go to once allowed to emigrate from Germany?

At the outset of negotiations, "Schacht estimated that there were 600,000 'racial' Jews in Greater Germany (including Austria and the Sudetenland). Of these, 200,000 would remain in Germany (without persecution) because their age and other factors made them unsuitable for resettlement. The plan called for the exodus of 150,000 wage earners...to be followed by their dependents over a three-year period. Schacht did not share the British Foreign Office's concern about where these people would go. The resettlement was the responsibility of the I.G.C.R. He suggested that they be resettled anywhere temporarily. The most important thing was to get them out of Germany at the earliest possible moment".
In outlining the financing of his plan, Schacht estimated the value of Jewish property in Germany at about six billion marks. Under his proposal, one and one-half billion of this would be placed in a trust fund in Germany. Jews outside Germany would then raise an equivalent amount in foreign currency. This capital, in the form of a loan secured upon the Jewish property held in trust, would be available to emigrating Jews to use in establishing themselves outside Germany. Interest and amortization of the loan would be charged against the Jewish property in the trust fund. Schacht’s proposal stipulated that the non-German currencies needed to service the projected debt would have to come from an increase of German exports over their usual level.

American response to the plan was not good. Officials in government and even leaders of Jewish groups felt that the plan was ransom, and that if it could be successfully carried out, Germany may try similar things with other groups of unwanted people. However, nearly everyone agreed that the plan should not be scrapped totally. George Rublee then proposed certain revisions based on a similar plan of his own. This became known as the “Rublee Plan” and it was presented to the Germans in Berlin.

To avoid the problem of the fund being financed by Jews from the Western Nations, which would make Germany’s theory of international Jewry appear true, a revision was discussed by Rublee and Sumner Welles. “In this scheme a central financial organization was to be established in London with an initial funding of $50 million some of which would be financed by Germany. The function of this agency was to sponsor settlement projects for refugees and to assist them through loans. The officers of the bank would be international financiers instead of Nazi ‘trustees’. The bank would be self-sustaining because expenditures would be in the form of loans instead of grants.”
"Rublee arrived in Berlin on January 10, 1939. After two days of unproductive talks the Germans broke off negotiations to study the 'modifications' in the plan made by Welles. When discussions resumed on January 21, Rublee was dumbfounded by the Germans rejection of Welles' loan plan. The next day, discussions were postponed once more and Rublee learned that Schacht had been removed from his position as Reichsbank president."

Negotiations were continued with Hermann Goering and Schacht's successor, Helmut Wohlthat of the German Economics Ministry. Rublee got the Germans to make some concessions. One was that the international "organization for financing would be established, but without German assistance". The Germans did not keep some of the other concessions in Rublee's plan.

The United States approved the Rublee plan. "George Rublee resigned as director and was replaced by Sir Herbert Emerson, League High Commissioner for Refugees." Much time elapsed before the organization of the Coordinating Foundation was complete. This was the name given to the foundation which would finance the plan. On "July 30, 1939, the Coordinating Foundation came into existence". Unfortunately, two things happened before any work could be done. "On May 17, 1939, the British Government had issued the White Paper which restricted total Jewish immigration to 75,000 persons over the next five years into Palestine." On June 8, 1939, President Roosevelt, in light of the fact that there was little cooperation from the other nations declared that the I.G.C.R. would be made inactive and that it should "maintain only a skeletal staff in London, paid from voluntary contributions 'as member governments might consider appropriate'."
Although the Coordinating Foundation came into existence in July, the only money it had to work with came primarily from American Jewish organizations, specifically the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. By that time, it was too late for anything to be done. The democracies in Europe were too entangled in the impending crisis and forgot about the refugees. "Hitler marched his troops into Poland on the pretext that the Poles had not accepted his demands for restoration to the Reich of Danzig and the Polish Corridor, and Great Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939."45 Six years into the refugee crisis and still virtually nothing had been done to solve it.
III. THE WAR YEARS: 1939-1945
A. THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

The U.S. Congress was hardly sympathetic to the plight of the refugees in Europe during the war years. Any legislation proposed to aid the people of Europe was dismissed by the legislature as soon as possible. It did not seem to matter if the legislation was intended only to aid helpless children; Congress always seemed to find a way out of it.

The first significant attempt to pass legislation to aid refugees was the Wagner-Rogers Bill or Child Refugee Bill. The bill was introduced in the Senate by Robert F. Wagner of New York. In the House, Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts introduced the bill. The Resolution (Senate Joint Resolution 64, House Joint Resolution 168) was introduced in early 1939 and read as follows:

"Joint Resolution to authorize the admission into the United States of a limited number of German Refugee Children.

"Whereas there is now in progress a world-wide effort to facilitate the emigration from Germany of men, women, and children of every race and creed suffering from conditions which compel them to seek refuge in other lands; and

Whereas the most pitiful and helpless sufferers are children of tender years; and

Whereas the admission into the United States of a limited number of these children can be accomplished without any danger of their becoming public charges, or dislocating American industry or displacing American labor; and

Whereas such action by the United States would constitute the most immediate and practical contribution by our liberty-loving people to the cause of human freedom, to which we are inseparably bound by our institutions, our history, and our profoundest sentiments; Now, therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that not more than ten thousand immigration visas may be issued during each of the
calendar years 1939 and 1940, in addition to those authorized by existing law and notwithstanding any provisions of law regarding priorities or preference, for the admission into the United States of children fourteen years of age or under, who reside, or at any time since January 1, 1933, have resided, in any territory now incorporated in Germany and who are otherwise eligible: Provided that satisfactory assurances are given that such children will be supported and properly cared for through the voluntary action of responsible citizens or responsible private organizations of the United States and consequently will not become public charges.**®

In discussing what occurred with the Wagner-Rogers act it is important to note two aspects of this bill. In the third paragraph the bill states that these children can be admitted without becoming public charges; and in the last paragraph it states that the children will be admitted if satisfactory assurances are given that the children will be supported. In other words, if there was no way to support the children without government aid, they could not have been admitted. This is important because most of the opposition to letting these children in came from people and organizations who felt that the children would be an extra burden on the nation.

Senate subcommittee hearings on the bill took place on April 20-24, 1939 and House hearings took place on May 24-June 1, 1939. It becomes obvious when one reads through the texts of those hearings that many more of the witnesses who appeared were in favor of passage of the bill than were against passage of it. Contrary to that, it seems that more of the members of Congress were against it than were in favor of it. Of course, this is obvious from the fact that the bill did not pass. However, this attitude seemed to prevail even at the beginning of the hearings.

For example, throughout the Senate hearings certain members of Congress continually nit-picked at the witnesses in favor of
Representative Kramer of California seemed to be particularly adept at this. During one part of the hearings, Mr. Kramer continued to attack a witness on the question of a child having affidavits of support to come here and stay with a family. As the testimony reads,

"Representative KRAMER: 'You mentioned affidavits; that we are going to rely on affidavits in relation to the future support and maintenance of these children....'

Mr. PICKETT (of the American Friends Service Committee): 'Yes.'

Representative KRAMER: 'What is that going to amount to? I have seen affidavits that have been changed and changed and rechanged. I also know of a case of an instance where a man made a certain affidavit under oath that a certain thing happened, and later he made an affidavit that it did not happen. He was guilty of perjury and was put in the penitentiary, and the Government must feed him and we will let him out in a year or two.'" 47

Representative Kramer continued with his ridiculous examples which were totally unrelated to the issue at hand. A few moments later Representative Kramer stated that refugee children should not be let in because they "eventually will migrate into California which has its hands full right now taking care of its own children and which will be in danger with respect to taxation." 48

Kramer was not the only person to carry on this way. During the second set of hearings Joseph A. Padway, Counsel for the American Federation of Labor read a statement written by the Federation's President which favored passage of the bill. After Mr. Padway read this, three members of the Committee; House Representatives Allen (Louisiana), Poage (Texas) and Talle (Iowa) spent a lengthy amount of time interrogating Mr. Padway as to whether or not the letter was the position of the A. F. of L. 49
With this type of circus atmosphere prevailing, it is no wonder that a decent bill was never passed. Furthermore, it is amazing that these types of people were responsible for a measure of this importance.

While these hearings were taking place other nations which had even less room for immigrants than the United States were doing their part to help these children. For example, "the Netherlands had reacted to the Kristallnacht by welcoming seventeen-hundred German Jewish children, and overcrowded Belgium admitted several hundred more. But the most dramatic response was that of Great Britain, which opened its crowded island to more than nine thousand refugee children." 50

The United States still had not done its part even though the plan to move these children had been completely worked out by the Quakers with no expense to our government. "The Quakers had worked out the complex details of moving the twenty-thousand children to the United States. In collaboration with child care specialists, physicians, psychologists and refugee organizations of all faiths, they developed procedures for the selection, transportation, reception and distribution of the children." 51 Many influential people including Mrs. Roosevelt supported the bill. When the idea of the bill was first brought up, "William LaRoe Jr., representative for the Nonsectarian Committee for German Refugee Children received 1400 or more letters from people who freely and voluntarily offered to take children into their homes." 52 This was before any attempt to find homes for the children was ever made. Eddie Cantor, the popular comedian wrote the following letter to Marvin McIntyre, the Presidential Secretary: "My dear Marvin,
for generations to come, if these boys and girls were permitted entry into this country, they would look upon our leader as a saint - they would bless the name of Franklin D. Roosevelt.... If it met with the approval of the President, and Congress, I would furnish you with the names and references of the families willing to adopt these unfortunate children. 

Even Helen Hayes testified that she would adopt a child from Germany at the hearings on the bill.

With all of this support Franklin D. Roosevelt did not make any effort to get the bill through Congress. McIntyre replied to Cantor that "it would be inadvisable to raise the question of increasing quotas... during the present Congress. There is a very real feeling that if this question is too prominently raised... during the present session, we might get more restrictive rather than liberal immigration." 

Arthur D. Morse, author of *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy*, felt that Roosevelt did not approach Congress because "he feared the antagonism of Congress, for at that very moment he was seeking half a billion dollars from an isolationist Congress to expand the Air Corps and to construct Naval bases. The President's priority clearly went to defense." In regard to Eleanor Roosevelt, Morse continued, "many years later Eleanor would explain her husband's seeming indifference to crusades in which she participated actively. 'While I often felt strongly on various subjects,' she wrote in *This I Remember*, 'Franklin frequently refrained from supporting causes in which he believed, because of political realities.'" 

Even without President Roosevelt's support the measure still
had a strong backing. Why then, didn't it pass? The basic reasons that the bill did not succeed were that the restrictionists made heavy use of the phrase "charity begins at home", referring to the fact that these people believed that there were too many needy American children who should have been aided instead of foreign children. "A flood of concern burst forth for sharecropper and city poor children. 'Shall we sentence these slum children to crime, poverty, and hopelessness while we import children from a foreign country?' asked the American Immigration Conference Board in a handbill entitled 'America's Children are America's Problem! Refugee Children in Europe are Europe's Problem!'" 57 This cry carried weight even though Katharine F. Lenroot, Chief of the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor stated, "I believe that the admission to this country of refugee children in the numbers indicated would not lessen in the slightest degree the care and protection afforded a single American child." 58

Secondly, it is known that the Seventy-Sixth Congress was extremely restrictionist and had sixty anti-alien proposals introduced into it. "One of the sixty anti-alien proposals introduced into the Seventy-Sixth Congress by Representative Stephen Pace of Georgia (H.R. 9999), suggested simply that 'every Alien in the United States shall be forthwith deported.'" 59 Furthermore, "part of the support which had been anticipated for the bill never materialized because of a belief in some circles that the proposal would lead to the breakup of German families". 60 Senators who were polled in late March, 1939 as to whether they would favor passage, "reported a preponderant feeling in the Senate that this subject is 'too hot to handle'. Only 45 Senators were willing to
reveal their views; of these 21 favored the measure and 24 opposed it."

Most of the opposition to the bill came from patriotic and restrictionist organizations. It is interesting to note that representatives of these groups, many of them small, were given equal time for testimony as was the American Federation of Labor’s representative. Obviously, the A.F. of L. represented many more people than did these other groups. An additional note in analyzing this area of the topic is that "while almost no overtly anti-semitic statements came out in the testimony against the bill, the Nation stood on safe ground when it charged that a 'subtle and effective argument is the sotto voce contention that this is a Jewish bill. The implication is that all of the children are Jewish'. In many quarters, this was reason enough for keeping them out."62

By the beginning of June, it seemed certain that the Immigration Committee would not report the bill. "Wagner delivered an impassioned radio address nationwide...in an attempt to elicit widespread public support at the last moment for his measure. It failed to do this, and when the bill emerged from committee on June 30, it was with the amendment that the 20,000 children enter the country under existing quotas...giving 10,000 of the annual 27,000 German certificates to the children on a preferential basis instead of adding 10,000 to the 27,000."63 Wagner vehemently opposed this on the grounds that this measure would further jeopardize the position of adults trying to enter the country. Because of this, the bill never came up for a vote.

This was not the end of the refugee debate although it was
the most widely discussed bill. Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina was staunchly restrictionist. Throughout the year 1939, Senator Reynolds made statements in the Senate denouncing any attempt to ease immigration restrictions. Reynolds and Wagner were at opposite ends of the table when it came to immigration. In the same year as the bill to admit German refugee children came up, Senator Reynolds introduced a bill which stated that "no quota immigrant shall be admitted into the United States for a period of five years". When the Senate Committee on Immigration reported the bill it had tacked on to Section 19 which was the same piece of legislation that was introduced by Senator Wagner and Representative Rogers. This package provided for admission of twenty-thousand children and no adults. However, this bill did not pass either.

During the war years there were very few bills in Congress that attempted to aid the refugees of Europe. One bill which seemed to attract some attention in the nation (aside from the Wagner-Rogers bill) was the result of something known as the Slatery Report. This report was a publication of the Department of the Interior and it was officially entitled, The Problem of Alaskan Development. The book was published in August, 1939, and it discussed the facts about Alaska. The book outlined the riches in newsprint and other forest products, tin, seafood, fur and several additional resources which awaited fuller development in Alaska. Pointing out that the vast territory contained only sixty-thousand inhabitants, the report went on to discuss Alaska's slow population growth. The report blamed this slow growth on the restriction of immigration due to the Immigration Act of 1924 and hinted that
immigration could solve Alaska's problems." One part of the report stated that "the people of Alaska...want to see their land populate, and it makes little difference whether this population comes from the United States or abroad." This sparked off several people who wrote rebuttals to the Department of the Interior. President Roosevelt formulated a plan for immigration into Alaska. "The plan involved moving 10,000 settlers into Alaska during each of the next five years. Half would come from the United States and the other half would come from abroad, the aliens entering Alaska outside the quotas." Public sentiment seemed to be in favor of this plan and in March, 1940, it was introduced in the Senate by William H. King of Utah and in the House by Frank Havenner of California. It then became known as the King-Havenner Bill.

The bill stated that "each immigrant must be a person between the ages of 16 and 45, or the spouse or child or adopted child of such a person". The bill further stated that each settler "shall not be admitted to citizenship unless he shall have resided continuously in the Territory of Alaska for five years following his admission to the Territory and shall have been reclassified as a quota immigrant." This clause meant that an immigrant could not come to this country and attain citizenship by going through Alaska.

Unfortunately, the bill seemed to have failed to attract widespread support once it was proposed in Congress. This is most likely attributed to the fact that the residents of Alaska didn't begin speaking up against the bill until this time. "A vigorous opposition arose to counter the meager support which the Alaska Development Bill succeeded in attracting. By far, strongest disapproval came from
Alaskans themselves and for the most part centered on the refugee aspect of the measure." The part of the Alaska plan which the "Alaskans detest most is the proposed large-scale colonization of the territory by European refugees". They resent the creation of a class restricted to residence in the territory, their occupations prescribed by law, their residence in the States forbidden. Alaskans felt...that such discrimination would set the territory off from the rest of the United States, and thus work irreparable harm. David Wyman, in his book Paper Walls seems to find another reason for the Alaskan opposition to the bill. As he states, "an editorial in the Alaska Weekly asserted, 'that it is Jewish capital and that the refugees to be poured into Alaska if this bill is passed will be Jewish is obvious...the consensus of opinion in the territory held that Jews would be the least desirable of immigrants because of being the least adaptable to Alaskan conditions.'

Although supporters of the bill attempted to pass the bill through committee primarily on the basis that it was an Alaskan development bill and secondarily an immigration bill, they failed to do so. Senator Reynolds, the renowned restrictionist continually turned the discussion at the hearings around so that it appeared that the bill was solely an immigration bill. Reynolds thought that the bill should only be supported if "its benefits are limited to American citizens".

The plan to develop Alaska and aid refugees at the same time did not succeed. The bill died in the Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs. No further action was ever taken on the measure. Again, Congress failed to help the persecuted people of
Europe. This, in spite of the fact that the immigration quota for Germany and Austria was filling up quite rapidly. On January 30, 1941, the *New York Times* reported that "although the current 'immigration year' has five months to go, the full twelve-month quotas for Germany, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and Hungary have been allotted."75 "The heavy influx of immigrants from the Axis-controlled parts of Central Europe reflected the spread of war and its resultant creation of an ever-increasing flow of political and racial refugees to the United States".76

At this point, the refugee issue, as far as Congress was concerned, became unimportant until after the war.
B. EXECUTIVE BRANCH:

1. PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

No analysis of American policies toward the displaced persons would be complete without a discussion of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

It is very hard to ascertain why President Roosevelt behaved in the manner he did during the years of crisis. However, it is certain that although his policies for internal growth may have been quite an aid to the American people, his policies toward the refugees in Europe left much to be desired. Aside from the creation of the War Refugee Board, which came late in the tragedy, Roosevelt did virtually nothing to aid the refugees.

Certainly President Roosevelt was aware of the attitude and behavior of Congress. But through most of the refugee crisis he chose not to try and influence Congress. Not only that, but he seemed to have kept himself out of the dealings of people in the State Department. Roosevelt could have chosen to come to the aid of the persecuted, but he chose not to.

We have already discussed some of Roosevelt's behavior in the pre-war days. Now we will discuss the actions of the President during the war years.

Many of Roosevelt's opinions or ideas about what to do with the refugees are made clear through examination of texts of his Presidential Press Conferences.

In October, 1939, about six weeks after the outbreak of war in Europe, the President was discussing the possibilities of eventual settlement of refugees in other areas of the world. At one press conference, he had stated that studies would have to be made to see
if these areas were habitable and that these studies should be undertaken by the Intergovernmental Committee and funded by the neutral nations. During this discussion a reporter asked, "How about the relocation of those in Europe now? The refugees that are now scattered..." The President cut-in and stated that, 'that is a relatively minor subject that ought to be taken care of by private funds within the next year or two.' The Intergovernmental Committee became defunct shortly thereafter and even at that time, there were thousands of refugees in need of aid. Yet, Roosevelt considered them a "minor subject".

Even after the creation of the War Refugee Board in 1944, Roosevelt's attitude toward the displaced persons was a little hard to comprehend. The President suggested that temporary havens for refugees be set-up. At a press conference in June, 1944, one reporter asked to clarify whether the President intended for these temporary havens to be in the United States. The President's reply was that "if we can prevent making them (the refugees) take those two sea voyages by putting some of them in some other place, well, they won't have to take the sea voyage. That is common sense..."

In other words, the President seemed to have been more concerned with making the refugees go back and forth than letting them stay in this country away from the persecution they would have to endure in Europe. Edward N. Saveth, in his article "Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Jewish Crisis: 1933-1945" attempts to argue that the President was a great humanitarian and fought the Nazi persecution throughout its twelve-year duration with his strong statements against Nazi atrocities. It seems, however, that Roosevelt's humanitarian statements were merely words which did nothing to prevent what was taking place in Europe. Saveth refers to Roosevelt's
initiative in establishing the Evian Conference, Intergovernmental Committee and Bermuda Conference. It does not seem to matter to Saveth that these conferences and the Committee did virtually nothing. Instead, he excuses Roosevelt by stating that, "if these and other measures were not as effective as some had hoped in alleviating the plight of those whom the Nazis sought to destroy, it was not because the Administration was wanting, but because of the savage and inhuman character of the adversary." 79

Saveth also congratulates the President on his strong statements in regard to such things as guilt for committing the atrocities. "It is our intention that just and sure punishment shall be meted out to the ringleaders responsible for the organized murder of thousands of innocent persons and the commission of atrocities which have violated every tenet of the Christian faith." 80 The President made this statement in October, 1942. It is a known fact that after this time the Germans speeded up their extermination program. Roosevelt's words were wasted breath. Instead, concrete action was needed to remove the people from Europe.

President Roosevelt's ideas about resettlement seemed to have a strange undertone of "the farther away from home the settlement is, the better it will be". Many areas of the world were considered for resettlement and it seemed that

"the Administration pressed ahead with a plan to make Angola or perhaps Rhodesia into a refugee republic. America's own experience as a successful resettlement operation was too strong to overcome. While Roosevelt was focusing on Africa as the most likely place where new 'huddled masses' could be settled, Whitehall (of Great Britain) had shown increasing interest in British Guiana in the American sphere. Neither side seemed particularly enthusiastic about
committing its own sphere to resettlement. Roosevelt's enthusiasm showed a suspicious increase the further such resettlement schemes were away from home. When Harold Ickes pushed for resettlement... in the Virgin Islands the idea was rejected by the administration."81

The Administration only approved one plan to allow refugee settlement here. That came late in the war and allowed for only a relatively small group of refugees to enter. President Roosevelt stated on June 9, 1944, that it was "important that the United States indicate that it is ready to share the burden of caring for refugees during the war. Accordingly, I have decided that approximately 1000 refugees should be placed in an Emergency Refugee Shelter to be established at Fort Ontario near Oswego, New York, where under appropriate security restrictions they will remain for the duration of the war. The President stated that the refugees will be brought into this country outside the regular immigration procedure."82 The President spoke of this action as if it were a great humanitarian act. A humanitarian act it was, however, the gesture was an extremely latecoming apology for years of insensitivity. Furthermore, less than one thousand people was certainly a "token shipment" as the pamphlet describing the event, printed by the War Relocation Authority is fittingly titled. It appears that Roosevelt felt that this act was a demonstration of our government's and his administration's real concern for the safety and well-being of these people. However, if the Administration's real concern had been there, where were they when the St. Louis carrying over 900 passengers was drifting off of the coast of Miami. Surely, if these people could be brought into New York State outside regular immigration procedure, then the passengers of the St. Louis could have been brought in also. Roosevelt
obviously felt that allowing the refugees into this country in 1944 would give the appearance that the United States was doing its part.

The question as to why Roosevelt behaved the way he did during the refugee crisis has perplexed many scholars for years. Different theories have been advocated to explain this behavior. A popular explanation for this is that the State Department continually made the refugee situation appear to Roosevelt as better than it actually was. This theory claims that even Eleanor Roosevelt could not get through to her husband because the State Department always made sure to get there first. When this was finally uncovered to Roosevelt in late 1943, he began to take action such as creating the War Refugee Board. This seems to be an unlikely situation. Although the State Department did do much to interfere in the rescue of the refugees, Roosevelt could have made it his business to find out all of the facts. The facts were not hidden. Most people knew that the situation in Europe for the refugees was serious. This could be ascertained just by reading the major newspapers.

Henry Feingold, who seems to devote much time to finding out why Roosevelt was so ineffective has a theory which seems to make more sense. Feingold asserts that,

"Once it is understood that rescue required a commitment and a price which Roosevelt was unwilling or unable to make, the puzzling activities of the Administration become more comprehensible. Roosevelt and many in the Administration wanted to rescue Jews - if only the price weren't so high and the possibility so remote. In the absence of active measures, humanitarian rhetoric was substituted for action. Virtually every action taken before the establish-
ment of the War Refugee Board; the Evian and Bermuda Conferences, the search for resettlement areas, the liberalization of the visa procedures, and even the establishment of a temporary refugee haven in Oswego in August, 1944, should be viewed as humanitarian gestures without serious intention of carrying it through...Roosevelt was using the State Department as a foil. It was one of the few instances in which Roosevelt found some use for the Department. Roosevelt, in fact, was fully briefed on the rescue issue and knew entirely what was happening.63

In closing the discussion of Franklin D. Roosevelt there are two more points which should be made.

The first is that Franklin D. Roosevelt had the power to prevent some of the atrocities in Europe. Not only could he have done this, but, he could have done so without any interference from the State Department. As Saul Friedman states, "F.D.R. could have warned the Nazis that unless the gassing of Jews stopped, the Allies would retaliate against the civilian populace of Germany with poison gas."84 But, moreover, Roosevelt could have done something even more humane and functional than that. Friedman continues,

"the President could have ordered the bombardment of the railway lines to the death camps or against the crematoria in the camps themselves. This idea had been suggested to the Allied High Command early in 1944 by Chaim Weizmann of the Jewish Agency. It also had the approval of Roswell McClelland in Switzerland and John Pehle in Washington. Since May, 1943, when the Warsaw Ghetto was in its death throes, Russian bombers were striking at Warsaw, Malkin, Brest and Lublin in nighttime raids. At the same time American bombers based in North Africa were passing daily over the very railroad lines leading from South Central Europe to the camps in the north. The American planes came to attack the Ploesti oil fields in Rumania, and then they continued on to Russian airfields, where they took on addition-
al bombs for the return flight. In this circuit, the prime targets were the oilfields; but in operational scratches, sometimes resulting from poor visibility, the aviators were permitted to dump their bombloads on targets of opportunity, with first preference going to the railroad lines. Despite this policy, the tracks from Hungary to Romania to Poland’s death camps remained relatively unscathed and their traffic in human lives uninterrupted.85

The second point is that the era of World War II did demonstrate one important thing about Franklin Roosevelt. He was an astute politician. He managed to come out looking good after all of this. He mesmerized all factions of society and all political colleagues into believing that he was doing all he could. Whether that be for the pro-refugee groups or the restrictionists.
Many of the problems involved with refugee immigration have been blamed on the State Department, and rightly so. Up until early 1944, the Department continued to obstruct refugee immigration, particularly Jewish immigration, to the fullest extent possible. Breckinridge Long was appointed to the position of Assistant Secretary of State in January, 1940. From that time until December, 1944 when he left that position, he heavily influenced the policy of the State Department. Long has been credited as being the greatest source of obstructionism and the man most responsible for the Department's behavior toward refugees. In late 1943, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, caught on to Long and State's refugee tactics. Through evidence of obstruction which Morgenthau was able to uncover, he persuaded President Roosevelt to take the question of refugee immigration out of the State Department's hands. In early 1944, Roosevelt announced the formation of the War Refugee Board and immigration of refugees from Europe to the United States increased dramatically. A question which has been discussed at length since the formation of the War Refugee Board is whether or not many more could have been saved had the problem been taken out of the State Department's hands earlier. Henry Morgenthau, Jr., insists that the answer is yes.

The State Department used varying tactics to cut back on refugee immigration. For example, State went so far as to "accuse the refugees of being Nazi and Communist agents." Furthermore, State succeeded in convincing Roosevelt that this problem
of spies a real threat. Because of this,

"in June, 1940, the President signed the alien Registration Act which required all aliens over 14 to be registered and fingerprinted. And a 'special care' circular was issued by the State Department advising all consular and diplomatic officers to reevaluate all visas and extirpate the so-called subversive elements. No visa whatsoever was to be issued if there was 'any doubt concerning the alien'. The best interests of the United States had to be considered even if it meant a 'drastic reduction' of quotas. The reinforced controls may have kept some spies out of the country, but it enabled unsympathetic consuls to reject Jews who held legitimate visas and tickets".87

This mandate, to check all visas carefully, was blown out of proportion by many consuls. Some of them simply refused visas because they didn't feel like issuing them, never mind that the person's life may have been at stake. In 1940 and 1941, Varian Fry, a reporter for The Nation made a tour of American consulates in Lisbon, Marseilles, Nice, Vichy and Madrid. In an article entitled "Our Consuls at Work" Fry describes some of the events that transpired when people attempted to get visas to the United States. What follows is a brief sampling.

"Lisbon, August 1940.... The vice-consul in charge of visas had his own ideas about who should be admitted to the United States and who should not. I showed him my list. One of the first names on it was Lion Feuchtwanger. 'If that man should come to me and ask for a visa,' the vice-consul said, 'I'd refuse it. He put on a regular song and dance about the Soviet Union a few years ago. We don't want this kind in the United States.'"88

Unfortunately, this was not an isolated case.

"Nice, December 1940. The young vice-consul in charge of visas here is fond of trick questions. A few weeks ago he put this one to a German Jew from the camp of Gurs: 'What would you do if you
were admitted to the United States and someone asked you to do something against the interests of the Italian or German government?"

The man from Gurs thought a moment. 'I would do what was in the interests of the United States,' he said. 'Visa refused,' the vice-consul snapped. 'We don't want anyone in the United States who is going to mix up in politics.'

Bewildered and heartbroken, the man went back to Gurs. He is still there, wondering why his answer was wrong."89

The Department came under fire from many different sources including the media. In response to this, the Department released a statement "designed to silence the mounting protest against its handling of the emergency refugee problem...The statement painted a picture of efficient and sympathetic yet careful procedure, operating smoothly to rescue the deserving and weed out the dangerous."90 Freda Kirchwey, editor of The Nation lashed back at State with an editorial claiming that the Department practically lied in its statement and that, in fact, it appeared as though the Department was going out of its way to prevent refugees from coming into this country. "The department does not refuse visas. It merely sets up a line of obstacles stretching from Washington to Lisbon and on around to Shanghai. These ordinarily do the trick, and in the process wear down resistance where an out-and-out refusal would produce noisy protest."91

Most of the criticism of the State Department came during the years 1942-1944. There is good reason for this, as Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Former Secretary of the Treasury stated, "America has no cause to be proud of its handling of the refugee problem. We knew in Washington, from August, 1942, on, that the Nazis were planning to exterminate all the Jews of Europe. Yet, for nearly
eighteen months after the first reports of the Nazi horror plan, the State Department did practically nothing."92

Just how the officials in Washington found this out is a story in itself. For it was this information that led to the removal of the refugee problem from the State Department to the War Refugee Board.

"On August 1, 1942, history thrust a terrible burden upon Gerhart Reigner, the representative in Switzerland of the World Jewish Congress. On that day Reigner, who had himself fled from Nazi Germany, learned from a leading German industrialist that many months before, Hitler had ordered the extermination of all the Jews in Europe. The information, relayed in Lausanne at the risk of the German's life, even specified the instrument of murder - prussic acid, the lethal ingredient of Zyklon B gas."93

"Reigner, like the governments of the United States and Great Britain, had been receiving a constant flow of information about the deportation of Jewish men, women and children to Poland. He knew, and they knew, about the mass executions of Jewish nationals in Poland and Russia.... But for all their awareness of the enormity of Nazi barbarism... neither the United States nor Great Britain had any knowledge in August, 1942 of a specific order for the total extermination of the Jews...."94

"Reigner realized that if the information he had received could be authenticated and transmitted to the United States and Britain, as well as to his colleagues of the World Jewish Congress, it might set programs of rescue in motion."95

Unfortunately, Reigner was not aware of the feelings of those in the State Department. He did not know that Breckinridge Long would not get to work immediately on the problem.

"Through private channels, Reigner got his ghastly story to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. Wise then
asked the State Department to confirm the information, and at the Department's request he kept the story to himself. While Washington cabled an inquiry to the American Minister at Bern, Leland Harrison. In November, 1942, Harrison sent back full documentation for Reigner's report, which State then told Wise he could make public. The United States officially denounced the Nazi policy of extermination on December 17, 1942, and Roosevelt declared that it would be American policy to punish racial and political murder.96

"On January 21, 1943, another Reigner cable arrived from Harrison in Switzerland. Its contents were stark and terrifying. It reported that Germans were killing Jews in Poland at the rate of 6,000 a day, that Jews in Germany were being deprived of food and ration cards, that Jews in Rumania were starving to death. Sumner Welles passed the cable on to Dr. Wise. Plans were immediately made for mass protests.... For weeks the State Department was bombarded with demands for action....97

The State Department did nothing in regard to this matter except make up excuses. As Morgenthau continues, "the State Department's reaction...took the form of trying to shut off the pressure by shutting off at the source the flow of information which nourished it."98

In order to shut off the source of information, the State Department sent a cable back the effect of which was "to order Harrison not to send back any more of Reigner's information.... Yet its language was such that a busy official...would clear it as a piece of administrative routine.... The cable was signed by Sumner Welles for Cordell Hull, but...Welles record suggests that he knew nothing about this cable."99

Two months later, in April, Welles not knowing about the
suppression cable, asked for more information. "Harrison replied that he was sending the text of another report from Reigner.... He added that such reports should not be subject to the restrictions imposed by the suppression cable." 100

The Treasury found out about the cable through its Foreign Funds Control Division which was "supposed to receive copies of cables bearing upon the refugee question". 101 They had heard about Harrison's remark and asked for a copy of the suppression cable which the State Department refused to hand over.

"In March, 1943, the World Jewish Congress cabled Washington that there was a real chance of rescuing 70,000 Jews from France and Rumania provided funds could be got into Switzerland." 102 The State Department did not want to pursue the matter. The Treasury Department had thought out a plan to get the money into Switzerland without the Germans being able to get at it. However, "within the State Department... Assistant Secretary Breckinridge Long... was opposed or dubious (about the plan) to the point of indifference." 103 Much time was spent trying to get the program underway. Morgenthau asserted that there had been "no failure to establish safe mechanisms for exchange. Rather, officers of the State Department and representatives of Great Britain had held up the program." 104 British policy made the task difficult because they, like some in State, felt that this monetary exchange would be detrimental to the policy of economic warfare against Germany. Morgenthau realized now that the only way to finish the deal was to have Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, handle it. Hull attempted to handle the British Foreign Office. However, they continued to stall the project as much as they could. Eventually, the plan fizzled out and the Jews
of Hungary were not saved.

However, before this happened Morgenthau, extremely upset by the actions of the State Department went to see Roosevelt himself. "On January 16, 1944, Morgenthau told the President that he was deeply disturbed by the conditions in the State Department. The Treasury, he said, had uncovered evidence indicating that subordinates there defying Hull, were not only inefficient in dealing with the refugee problem, but were actually taking steps to prevent the rescue of the Jews."105

The President told Morgenthau to speak about the situation with Under-Secretary of State Stettinius. It was apparent that Roosevelt did not fully buy the statements about Long's interference. Morgenthau told Stettinius that "he was convinced that people in the State Department, particularly Breckinridge Long, were deliberately obstructing the execution of any plan to save the Jews and that forthright, immediate action was necessary if this Government was not going to be placed in the same position as Hitler and share the responsibility for exterminating all the Jews of Europe."106

Stettinius stated that he was "not surprised about Breckinridge Long since Long had fallen just as badly and in an equally shocking way in the handling of the exchange of prisoners. Stettinius pointed out that...in the reorganization of the State Department, which he had worked out, the only remaining function assigned to Breckinridge Long was Congressional Relations".107

At Morgenthau's previous meeting with Roosevelt, Roosevelt had discussed a draft of an executive order with Morgenthau and John Pehle establishing a war refugee board. The plan called for
the Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of War and Secretary of State to operate the board. Stettinius examined the draft of the order and gave it his full endorsement. This satisfied F.D.R. who, "on January 22, 1944, established the War Refugee Board to assist the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe..." Finally, something concrete was implemented to aid the people of Europe.

As stated previously, much of the policy of the State Department was formulated by Breckinridge Long. Long has been charged with being unsympathetic to the refugee problem. Long was convinced that he had done all he could to solve the problem even after the evidence against him was out. As is demonstrated by his diary entry of January 24, 1944:

"The President has appointed a Refugee Board consisting of the Secretaries of State, War, and Treasury.... What they can do that I have not done, I cannot imagine.... However, I think it is a good move for local political reasons. For there are 4 million Jews in New York and its environs who feel themselves related to the refugees and because of the persecutions of the Jews, and who have been demanding special attention and treatment (sic). This will encourage them to think the persecuted may be saved and possibly satisfy them - politically - but in my opinion the Board will not save any persecuted people I could not save...."

Not only did Long believe everything possible had been done, but his opinions also seemed to have an anti-semitic flavor to them. Henry Feingold asserts that Long was "utterly devoted to foiling the rescue effort and was everywhere successful until Morgenthau was activated as a countervailing force within the administration.... Roosevelt felt his hands were tied by the continued strength of the restrictionists, and in case he forgot, Long was always there to remind him.... Much of the initiative for the alien reg-
istration and other security laws emanated from Long."\textsuperscript{110} Feingold also states that "Long was sick - sick with ambition, sick with anti-Semitism. He viewed his fight against the refugees as primarily a battle against Jewish Communist agitators who were trying to ruin his political career...."\textsuperscript{111}

It should now be obvious that a major part of the problems faced by refugees trying to get to the United States were caused by the State Department and Brockinridge Long. Had it not been for the interference of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., several thousand more may have been murdered.

Before discussing the War Refugee Board it is important to briefly discuss the Bermuda Conference of 1943.

The reports of atrocities in Germany "helped embarass the Allies into taking what appeared to be more positive action.... The attempt to dispel the impression of callous indifference to human suffering manifested itself in another sham conference.... Ostensibly called to help refugees, like so many previous meetings, the Anglo-American Bermuda Conference of April, 1943, turned out to be a conference of words without action."\textsuperscript{112}

The idea of a conference was that of the British and the Americans and it was called in response to a massive public outcry to aid the refugees of Europe. "Rabbi Stephen S. Wise organized the 'Stop Hitler Now' rally on March 1. Police estimated that seventy-five thousand persons attempted to enter the Garden which seated twenty-one thousand."\textsuperscript{113}

But why was there a seemingly quick turn-around in world public opinion. Demonstrations were taking place everywhere, not
only in the United States. "By the end of 1942, the world knew that Hitler's shrill railings against the Jews were no longer vain threats. At first, the reaction was one of sorrow and pity.... It did not take long, however, before the shock of this news was transformed into anger, and pressure mounted from all sides to rescue the remnants of European Jewry." 114

Prior to the Conference, the State Department drew up a memorandum for the American delegation to the conference. This memorandum instructed the Americans,

"not to limit the discussion to Jewish Refugees; not to raise questions of religious faith or race in appealing for public support or promising U.S. funds; not to make commitments regarding shipping space for refugees; not to expect naval escorts or safe-conducts for refugees; not to delay the wartime shipping program by suggesting that homeward-bound empty transports pick-up refugees en route; not to bring refugees across the ocean if any space for their settlement was available in Europe; not to pledge funds, since that was the prerogative of Congress and the President; not to expect any changes in the U.S. immigration laws; not to ignore the needs either of the war effort or of the American civilian population for food and money and not to establish new agencies for the relief of refugees, since the Intergovernmental Committee already existed for that purpose." 115

It is important to note that both this memorandum and the conference took place before the refugee problem was taken away from the State Department. Therefore, the incident is typical of State's behavior at that time.

Unfortunately, both the British and American Governments decided before the Conference that it would be extremely private. Only government personnel "and one representative of one Jewish group, O.R.T. President George Backer" was permitted to attend. 116
Also in attendance were four members of international press associations. The fate of the Conference was sealed even before it got under way. Furthermore, the Conference did not solve any of the problems of the refugees. Throughout it, "the press was kept uninformed about the actual course of the negotiations. However, throughout the ten days of the conference they were titillated with the prospect that Palestine, North Africa, Madagascar, Mauritius, French Equatorial Africa, the Diredawa section of Ethiopia, Kenya, Mogador, Argentina, Mexico, Jamaica, or the Isle of Man might serve as a haven for refugees. These reports were dutifully transmitted to the United States and Great Britain." The idea behind transmitting the reports was to show the people of those countries that action was being taken. However, this did not work. "Major publications including the New York Times, Washington Post, The Times (London) and the Daily Worker lashed out against the conference." 

The subject of America's immigration policies was a stickler at the conference. Especially in light of the fact that "in 1943, immigration to the United States totalled 23,725, the lowest figure in 110 years except for 1933. In 1943 alone, 130,000 legal entry certificates went unused. While thousand of Jews were gassed daily in Europe, only 4,705 Jews entered the United States that year." This was the result of the fact that unused quotas of other countries were not permitted to be used for the people from countries that needed them the most. This topic was never discussed at the Conference because as Harold Willis Dodds, Chief of the American Delegation stated, "we got direct word from the White House that we could not discuss increasing the quotas with the British." 

The British stuck to the terms of the White Paper with regard
to immigration to Palestine. The White Paper of 1939 had limited total Jewish immigration to Palestine at 75,000. A discussion of the revival of the Intergovernmental Committee came up although by the end of the war the I.G.C.R. had still accomplished next to nothing. What was the outcome of the Bermuda Conference? "At the conclusion of the Conference, the participants had 'explored' sufficiently to state that there was 'no immediate prospect of escape for the potential refugees in the grip of the Axis.'"121
3. THE WAR REFUGEE BOARD

As discussed earlier, on January 22, 1944, Franklin D. Roosevelt announced the formation of the War Refugee Board. According to the President, the Board "was charged with the responsibility of taking all action consistent with successful prosecution of the war to rescue the victims of enemy oppression in imminent danger of death and to afford such victims all other possible relief and assistance."122

The creation of this Board was the first concrete step taken by the Government of the United States in aiding the refugees since the beginning of the crisis in 1933. As Arthur D. Morse states,

"three days after the creation of the Board... a cable drafted by John Pehle was sent over the signature of Cordell Hull to all United States embassies, consulates and other diplomatic missions. It ordered that 'action be taken to forestall the plot of the Nazis to exterminate the Jews and other persecuted minorities in Europe'... The practice of suppressing unpleasant information had ended. The message specified that 'communication facilities should be made freely available to...private agencies for all appropriate messages for carrying out the policy of this government.'"123

"John Pehle, Jr., the...Assistant Secretary of the Treasury was made temporary director.... Within a few weeks it became apparent to all that he had taken a strong hold of the director's job...and he became permanent director."124

"The actual operation of the W.R.B. was kept deliberately small and flexible. The staff never exceeded thirty-five people, among whom specialists in refugee and rescue affairs figured prominently.... In all cases except one, Carlton Hayes, the American Ambassador to Spain, W.R.B. agents could depend on close support from the diplomatic missions. This was especially true in Turkey,
Initially it seemed that funding of the Board would be a problem because in an oversight, funding had not been planned for in the executive order. However, this did not turn out to be a problem because "Roosevelt granted the agency $1,000,000 from his emergency fund. Thereafter, the Board was to be financed by the private rescue agencies, primarily the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. In May, 1944, the W.R.B. received an additional $4,000,000 which it had to share with the I.G.C.R. However, this proved to be more than enough because when the agency ceased operations in 1945, it was able to give some of this money back."  

The actions of the war Refugee Board were highly effective and it is unfortunate that the Board or some other body like it was not established much earlier.

Unfortunately, as with every other organization, not everything is a success. This was the case when the Board attempted to save the 1,000,000 Jews of Hungary in 1944. The operation began in late May when Joel Brand, arrived "in Istanbul... documented as a representative of the Jewish Community of Budapest and submitted a proposal to the Jewish Agency. This proposal stated that Eichmann would agree to stop the deportation and extermination of Jews in all areas which the Germans occupy if Brand delivered a large amount of various goods." Unfortunately, as Brand attempted to travel to Syria to further discuss the proposal, the British arrested him there. Ira Hirschmann, of the War Refugee Board was sent to investigate the Brand situation. "Hirschmann caught up with Brand and his captors in Cairo..."
Hirschmann persuaded the British to release Brand and then... recommended that he be sent back to Hungary."¹²⁸ In the meantime the Soviet Union vetoed the United States decision to use Brand as a stalling agent and further the negotiations. Therefore, the United States called off the plan.

The War Refugee Board also attempted to persuade the War Department into bombing the railway lines to Auschwitz in order to stop the deportations. Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy replied that "the War Department is of the opinion that the suggested air operation is impracticable. It could be executed only by the diversion of considerable air support essential to the success of our forces now engaged in decisive operations and would in any case be of such very doubtful efficacy that it would not amount to a practical project."¹²⁹

These were two instances when the War Refugee Board would have been able to act, unfortunately its hands were tied. No one intervened to permit the Board to act. Although the Board did many things in Europe without going through the normal diplomatic ties, this was one instance in which the Board could not act independently.

However, the Board did have many successes. Before discussing these, it is important to note that the Board had a change of leadership about one year after its formation. "The War Refugee Board announced... on January 28, 1945...that John W. Pehle had resigned as Executive Director of the Board.... Mr. Pehle resigned because of new duties which have been assigned to him as Assistant
to the Secretary of the Treasury.... At the same time, the Board announced the selection of Brigadier-General William O'Dwyer as the new Executive Director..."130

On September 15, 1945, General O'Dwyer submitted his final summary report of the activities of the War Refugee Board. In it, he discussed the successes and the failures of the organization. The successes were important and with the exception of Hungary, which the Board could not control, they outnumbered the failures.

There is a post-script to the story of Jews in Hungary which demonstrates that the operation there was not a total failure.

"Raoul Wallenberg, a young Swedish businessman, volunteered to proceed to Hungary for the Board to aid in the rescue and relief.... The Swedish Government granted him diplomatic status and stationed him in Budapest for the purpose of rendering protection to these people. The Board furnished Wallenberg detailed plans of action, but made it clear that he could not act in Hungary as a representative of the Board. Wallenberg, supplied with funds from the Board and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, carried on a relentless campaign in Hungary in behalf of the Jews. He issued protective passports by the thousands and hired extra buildings as official Swedish quarters to house several hundred Rabbis and communal leaders under the protection of the extraterritoriality which attached to such buildings. He constantly pressed the Hungarian authorities for better treatment of Jews and succeeded in having thousands brought back to Budapest from the forced labor marches. In all, approximately 20,000 Jews received the safety of Swedish protection in Hungary."131

Unfortunately, Wallenberg was reported missing on April 4, 1945. He was reported dead in June, 1945. However, it is believed that Wallenberg may have been captured by the Russians and may be imprisoned in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government refuses to discuss the case.
The Board had made other successful attempts to save refugees. It "succeeded in developing a sporadic flow of refugees through Turkey. Approximately 7,000 persons were brought out by boat across the Black Sea from Rumania or by rail through Bulgaria then across Turkey into Palestine."132

"1,392 refugees were brought out of Rumania by sea which was supplemented by rail evacuation through Bulgaria to Turkey. These people were brought to final safety in Palestine."133

"539 refugees were able to escape from Greece by means of small fishing craft and other vessels plying the Aegean Sea to the Turkish coast, between January 1944 and February 1945. They were all sent on to Palestine."134

Although the preceding rescues were of relatively small groups, one of the largest successful rescue efforts took place in Rumania.

"Approximately 150,000 Jews had been deported in October 1941 from Bessarabia and Bucovina to Transnistria, a German-controlled area between the Dniester and Bug rivers. They were housed in deplorable camps in a territory virtually destroyed in the course of the German-Russian fighting. Epidemics broke out and thousands died. At the time of the Board's creation, reports were received that some 50,000 Jews still alive in Transnistria were in the direct line of the retreating German armies. Despite the fact that the United States and Rumania were at war, the Board's representative in Ankara, was able to arrange for the Rumanian Government to transfer these people from Transnistria to Rumania and later facilitate their emigration from Rumania. Rumania finally agreed, and late in March, 1944, 48,000 Jews were moved from Transnistria to Rumania. Many of them, mostly children, were transformed with other refugees from Rumania to Palestine."135

Although the War Refugee Board's good acts cannot be accepted as an apology for our government's blatant insensitivity in the previous years, it should be applauded for what it was able to accomplish. It is unfortunate that it was not put to
work much earlier.
C. PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED STATES

Public opinion toward the displaced persons or refugees was not favorable in the period 1939-1945, at least as far as immigration was concerned. Throughout this period restrictionist groups obviously held the strongest and the most-voiced opinions on the subject. For this reason, it was not difficult for the government to keep out as many refugees as it could. Although there were many voices for increased immigration, they could not be heard above those of the restrictionists. This appears to be an interesting phenomenon, especially when one considers that this country is a nation of immigrants. If the restrictionists were not immigrants themselves, then their parents or grandparents certainly were.

There is another interesting aspect of the public opinion question. About 1944, public sentiment seemed to turn around so that it was in favor of helping the refugees and persecuted people of Europe. However, public opinion still did not favor increased immigration to the United States.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to analyze public opinion in this era by using the statistics of public opinion polls. Very few national polls were taken at this time. No Gallup Polls were recorded on the public's opinion toward immigration in the Gallup Poll Reports of that period, although there is some information in another report. The only two questions that that poll asked on American's opinions toward immigration were taken in 1946 and 1955. The few polls dealing with refugee
immigration and kindred subjects were taken by Fortune Magazine.137

In "July, 1938, Fortune asked, 'What is your attitude toward allowing German, Austrian, and other political refugees to come into the United States?' The responses were as follows; 4.9% 'felt that we should encourage them to come even if we have to raise our immigration quotas'. 18.2% 'felt that we should allow them to come but not raise the immigration quotas'. 9.5% 'stated that they didn't know'. However, an overwhelming 67.4% felt that 'with conditions as they are, we should try to keep them out'.'138

Nearly one year later, in April, 1939, Fortune asked the following question; "'If you were a member of Congress, would you vote yes or no on a bill to open the doors of the United States to a larger number of European refugees than now are admitted under our immigration quotas?' Unfortunately, Fortune did not calculate results by the overall group of people asked. Instead they are broken down into religious groups. Of the Jewish people asked, '69.9% said yes, 25.8% said no, and 4.4% did not know'. Of the Catholics, '8.3% said yes, 84.0% said no, and 7.7% did not know'. Finally, of the Protestants, '6.5% said yes, 85.3% said no, and 8.4% didn't know'.'139

In 1945, Free World polled Americans and asked; "Here is a list of different groups of people. Do you think we should let a certain number of each of these groups come to the United States to live after the war, or do you think we should stop some of the groups from coming at all."140 The list included Germans, Japanese, Jews, Swedes, English, Mexicans, Chinese and Russians. However, we will only discuss those groups pertinent to this topic. "36% of those asked favored letting in Germans; 59% said no to letting them in and 5% said they didn't know. In regard to Jews;
46% said yes; 46% said no and 8% had no opinion. 62% said yes to Swedes; 27% said no, and 11% had no opinion. 68% said yes to English; 26% said no, and 7% did not know. Finally, 57% agreed to admitting Russians; 33% said no, 10% did not know. 141

These results are quite interesting when one realizes that the public knew about the sufferings of the Jews, yet they were split as to whether or not they should be let in. On the other hand, 68% wanted to admit the English who had suffered the least of any of the aforementioned groups during the war. Not only that, but when one looks at the statistics of Germans and Jews, there is only a difference of 10% with regard to admission of the two groups. As far as this is concerned only 10% more felt that Jews should be let in than felt that Germans should. This is quite interesting considering the fact that the Jews were the oppressed and the Germans the oppressors. Furthermore, the Germans had plunged the world into war and brought suffering onto the entire world.

Free World stated that "in general, 25% of Americans seem to be opposed to any kind of immigration whatsoever. Accordingly when...46% are opposed to Jewish immigration, these figures represent 21% over the average minimum of those opposed to all immigration. This difference could be regarded as the margin of special prejudices against certain foreign groups...."142 According to this reasoning there was less "special prejudice" against Germans than Jews.

In the early post-war years immigration of refugees was still not favored by the American public. This sentiment may be partly attributed to the fact that the public believed that most of the refugees or displaced persons were Jewish. Although this was true
throughout the pre-war and war years, the percentages changed after the war simply because of the fact that most of the Jewish people in Europe had been killed by 1945.

Although many Americans seemed to favor admission of other groups in the war years, their sentiments changed when that meant putting up people in their homes or using American passenger ships to transport them. It seems that once the question involved some type of sacrifice, either personal or on a national level, the attitudes changed.

In 1940, the American Institute for Public Opinion asked Americans several questions about certain groups of refugees.

"On June 26, A.I.P.O. asked 'should the U.S. permit English and French women and children to come to this country and stay until the war is over?' The responses were 98% yes, 42% no. However, when this same question was asked with the addition of 'would you be willing to take one or more of these children into your home until the war is over', the responses changed dramatically. 25% said yes, 54% said no and 21% were undecided." \(^{143}\)

In August of 1940, A.I.P.O. asked if people "would approve of sending American passenger ships to England to bring back English refugee women and children. 45% approved; 55% disapproved." \(^{144}\)

It is obvious that Americans were unwilling to make personal sacrifices. However, the question of whether or not we should send our ships there most likely had a lot to do with safety. When A.I.P.O. asked if Americans would approve of using these ships if Germany and Italy agreed not to attack them, "63% approved; 37% disapproved". \(^{145}\) Obviously, this early in the conflict Americans still had confidence in the word of Hitler's government.
It would take them quite a while to realize that that government could not be trusted.

In analyzing American public opinion in this time period, it is a safe assumption to say that organizations had a voice in the refugee issue and they were able to sway the public. Not only did large labor organizations, which were almost always restrictionist, affect public opinion, but smaller organizations did as well.

"Restrictionist sentiment flowed from many sources in this period. On the far right, neo-Nazi organizations gained in appeal by assaulting Jews, Bolsheviks and aliens. According to a report of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, dated January 3, 1939, there were 135 organizations in the United States which the Committee then regarded as fascist. Of these, perhaps only 25 percent were bonafide organizations."146 However, of these, some were very powerful.

"The Dies Committee reported that the German-American Bund, constructed on the foundations of the Chicago Teutonia Society and Friends of the New Germany, received its inspiration, programs and direction from the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda.... The Bund claimed a dedicated membership of 25,000, operated twenty-four retreat camps across the country, distributed thousands of pamphlets, sponsored a daily national radio program, and packed Madison Square Garden for patriotic rallies in 1939 and 1940. Moreover, through its control of the German-American press, estimated at better than 90 percent pro-Nazi by 1940, the Bund attempted to frustrate administration policies which they construed as prejudicial to the Fatherland, including any proposal for the harboring of refugees from Germany."147

A group which collaborated with the Bund was William Dudley Pelley's Silver Shirt Legion of America. "The Silver Shirts
claimed a membership of 100,000 before Pelley's arrests for
embezzlement and violation of the Espionage Act."

Even more influential than the two groups mentioned above
was Father Charles E. Coughlin of Royal Oak, Michigan. Coughlin
"had a radio audience of 3.5 million." Through this Coughlin
preached violent anti-semitic comments for years. Of course,
Coughlin was a pre-war influence. He preached from 1926 to
1938, until belatedly, the Catholic hierarchy in the U.S. moved
to shut him up. Nevertheless, he heavily influenced American
ideas in the war era.

So we see that it is not only labor organizations like the
Junior Order of American Patriotic and Fraternal Societies which
testified against immigration at Congressional hearings which
influenced American opinion. These other groups greatly influenced
it as well.

Overall, the American public was not very friendly to the
refugees or to anything related to the refugee question. Much
of this sentiment was justified by the excuse that immigration
fosters unemployment. However, this is obviously false. Numerous
studies have shown that an increase in immigration actually leads
to an increase in the number of jobs. For example, "in Great
Britain, according to figures presented to the House of Commons
...by the British Home Secretary, eleven thousand refugees have
made jobs for fifteen-thousand native-born Englishmen". Furthermore,"it is pertinent to point out that every period in American
history which saw a great influx of immigrants was followed within a comparatively short time by a rise in the prosperity of the
country."
However, the ideas of immigration and unemployment continued to be fostered by the large labor organizations such as the American Federation of Labor. The Federation's President, William Green, had favored passage of the Wagner-Rogers bill. Yet throughout the era there were numerous news stories discussing how the American Federation of Labor urged limits on immigration.

But the Federation was not the only group to call for restriction of immigration. Numerous organizations, basically the types of organizations which considered themselves "patriotic" constantly called for bans on, or decreases in, immigration.

For example, The New York Times stated in an article from June 5, 1941 that, "the American Legion urged Congress today to stop all immigration into the United States."

At the hearings on the Wagner-Rogers bill numerous organizations were present. The Allied Patriotic Societies, Incorporated stated that they were opposed to the bill on the grounds that it would "separate children from parents...raise unemployment...and inevitably lead to a further breakdown of our immigration quotas...."

Other groups with the same ideas included the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Young Americans, Incorporated and the American Coalition. The list is quite large. All of these groups fed fuel to the fire of restrictionism. That fire certainly gave no warmth to the thousands of displaced persons in Europe.

A pamphlet distributed by the Public Affairs Committee, Incorporated, summed up these groups quite well.

"This element consists of many sorts of people. Quite a few of them are professional..."
haters and Jew-baiters. Some of these function through organizations such as the American Coalition. Other organizations are largely rackets sponsored by individuals who exploit the fears of sincerely patriotic, if often ill-informed, citizens."

These groups used various tactics to get people to follow their beliefs. "They disseminated such fantastic rumors as that there are now from 5,000,000 to 20,000,000 aliens illegally in this country, most of them on federal relief; that 'foreigners' are getting control of the government in Washington; and that to bring in more refugees than the quotas allow is really part of a great and subtle plot to ruin the United States." 156

Unfortunately, in this period of time, it seems as though the citizens and government officials of this country managed to eat this propaganda up.
IV. THE POST-WAR YEARS: 1945-1952

The War in Europe came to an end with the German unconditional surrender "on May 7, 1945 in Rheims to Eisenhower, and one day later in Berlin to Zhukov, the Russian conqueror of Berlin." World War II left in its wake a confused and heterogeneous mass of refugees and displaced persons. Germany had been stripped of its civilian administration and the situation there was chaotic. No policy to deal with these circumstances had been defined at Yalta.

"When the United Nations took over shattered and defeated Germany, one of the major problems was to extend help to the victims of Nazi tyranny. There were some 6,500,000 of them - slave laborers from conquered lands, political prisoners, Jews persecuted under the brutal 'racial laws' of the Hitler regime, all referred to as D.P.'s, standing for Displaced Persons."

"In spite of chaotic communication and transportation conditions after V-E Day, over 4,000,000 of these 6,500,000 exiles had been moved out of Germany by July, and the number continued to climb. By late October, about one million remained." Of these one million, about 100,000 were Jewish.

The entire world political situation had changed. The War had come to an end. Twelve years of misery and suffering had come to an end for hundreds of thousands. Or had it?

The situation for those one million refugees left was pathetic. These were people who could not, or for very legitimate reasons would not go back to where they were before the war had begun. Many of them were in concentration camps, only now those
camps were referred to as "Displaced Persons Centers". The conditions in these "centers" were nearly as bad as during the war. As Earl G. Harrison, who had been sent by President Truman to investigate the situation in Europe said, "as matters now stand, we appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them, except that we do not exterminate them".161

Harrison kept a diary of what he saw in the camps as he toured them. Here is a sample of those conditions:

"Bergen-Belsen. We had been repeatedly told that it was useless to visit this place, hitherto one of the most terrible of all the Nazi concentration camps, because 'its all burned down'. Nevertheless, we found 14,000 displaced persons there, about half of them Jews. Building No. 1, with the gas chambers and crematoria had been destroyed. All the rest of Belsen remains much as the Nazis left it. The buildings are substantial, but frightfully overcrowded. We were in one loft, 20 by 80 feet, which housed 85 people with all of their belongings. Their whole lives had to be carried on in that partitionless, dreary space....

Celle. A 'bad camp' with many Jews living in horse stalls, sick and well together. One inmate told us: 'The hardest thing is to look outside the camp and see the Germans so much better off than we are, even the ones that used to be our guards and tormentors. They have better food and better clothes. And they are free.'162

These were the conditions of the D.P.'s after the War. Their German oppressors lived freely outside the camps while they continued to suffer. In the remaining portion of this paper, we will review what the United States did for these people in the post-war period.
A. UNITED STATES CONGRESS

The Displaced Persons problem came to a head in the Congress. With the results of the Harrison report on conditions in the "D.P. Centers" made public, President Truman began taking measures to help the D.P.'s. This action came in the form of what has come to be known as the "Truman Directive".

The President realized that "America's role in resettlement would help solve the problem both directly and indirectly, through stimulating other countries to follow suit.... President Truman directed American Consulates abroad to give preference in the issuance of immigration visas wherever possible to displaced persons...."\(^{163}\) More on Truman and his actions will be discussed later. However, the release of this statement and the Harrison report began to make the public aware of the D.P. problem. Pressure began to mount, although slowly, to do something about the situation.

Several months after the issuance of the Truman Directive, it became apparent that although the intentions of the directive were good, the measures taken were inadequate due to the quota laws in effect. "in the first nine months of 1946, only 5,000 displaced persons entered the country under the quota system."\(^{164}\) Aside from the fact that this dissatisfied President Truman and moved him to ask Congress to admit D.P.'s outside the quota system, it aroused public opinion. The result of this "was the formation in fall of 1946 of the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons. Chairman of the Board was Earl G. Harrison, and it included numerous other prominent figures".\(^{165}\) The Citizens Committee (CCDP) was
to be the "spearhead in the drive for displaced persons legis­
lation...." 166

The formation of the C.C.D.P. combined with the President's
request to aid the D.P.'s opened up a battle in Congress over
the subject. "In Congress, forty-nine senators and represent­
atives issued a statement pledging their support to a measure to
open unused wartime quotas to displaced persons. Meanwhile,
opposition quickly developed on the part of the restrictionists.
National Commander Paul Griffiths of the American Legion issued
a statement warning that the entry of displaced persons would
deprive veterans of both jobs and houses. Senator Revercomb
stated in a report on the D.P. problem that the Truman plan
'would of course break down the quota system and completely do
away with the present plan of allotments by countries and the
policy of national origins.'" 167

The battle over displaced persons legislation had begun. It
would be four years before it was settled.

In both his January, 1947, State of the Union Address and
his Special Address to Congress of July, 1947, President Truman
appeared to Congress to enact legislation favorable to admis­
sion of D.P.'s. In April, of 1947, "the first and simplest legis­
lative proposal concerning the D.P.'s was drafted by the C.C.D.P.
and introduced by Representative William Stratton, a young
Republican Congressman from Illinois." 168

The act read as follows:

"SECTION 1: This Act shall be known and may
be cited as the 'Emergency Temporary Displaced
Persons Admission Act'.

SECTION 2: During the four fiscal years follow­
ing the passage of this Act, displaced persons apply­
ing for admission for permanent residence to the
United States shall be admitted as non-quota immigrants provided that:

(a) They are qualified under all immigration laws of the United States for admission for permanent residence.

(b) Not more than one hundred thousand of such displaced persons shall be admitted under this Act during the first of the four fiscal years following the passage of this Act; not more than two hundred thousand during the first two of such fiscal years; not more than three hundred thousand during the first three of such fiscal years; and not more than four hundred thousand in the total four fiscal year periods.

SECTION 3. Priority shall be given to the widow, parents, children, and other relatives within the fourth degree of consanguinity of citizens of the United States or of persons who served honorably in the armed services of the United States during World War II or World War I.

SECTION 4. The Secretary of State and the Attorney General shall have authority to prescribe appropriate regulations for the administration of the provisions of this Act and the President may utilise such agencies of the Government as he deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 5. As used in this Act, the term 'Displaced Person' means a person in Germany, Austria, or Italy at the time of the passage of this Act who (1) is out of his country of former residence as a result of events subsequent to the outbreak of World War II; and (2) is unable or unwilling to return to the country of his nationality or former residence because of persecution or his fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinions."

As we will see shortly, the bill that came out of Congress was not the same as the bill mentioned above.

"The testimony of the hearings revealed that two basic issues were in dispute - the effect of the admission of displaced persons on American society and the extent to which the United States was obligated to help these stateless people." Additionally, although such organizations as the American Legion and the American Coalition "set forth their vigorous opposition..."
to the displaced persons program...they were greatly out-numbered by the sponsors of the plan."\textsuperscript{171}

The question of the effect of the D.P.'s on American Society was addressed several times. Those people in favor of the bill answered this question by stating that these were the strongest people left after the war. As Representative Stratton stated in his opening remarks at the hearings, "most of them (the D.P.'s) represent a survival of the fittest, having escaped and endured what millions of their kinsmen could not survive."\textsuperscript{172}

Even some organizations which were restrictionist throughout the war years, now favored this legislation. One such group was the American Federation of Labor. The A.F.L. "unanimously recommended emergency legislation to permit the unfilled quotas of the war period to be utilized by entry into our country of those suffering displaced persons of Europe."\textsuperscript{173} The A.F.L. also had previously stated that it did not want refugees taking jobs away from Americans. However, the A.F.L. now suddenly changed its tune. As William Green, President of the Federation testified, "H.R. 2910 will not have any diverse bearing on the American workman. More than 50 percent of the D.P.'s are women and children. They will not be job competitors. The small number admitted each year...cannot have any serious effect on our employment problem. On the contrary...they will fill some of our labor shortages...."\textsuperscript{174}

Herbert H. Lehman, representing the National Community Relations Advisory Council claimed that the D.P.'s could only benefit our country. As Lehman stated, "far from being, as the name 'displaced persons' implies, people who are passive, without
Despite the horrors they have had to endure they have, as one skilled observer puts it, 'an almost obsessive will to live normally again.'

Opponents of the bill continually claimed that admission of these people would have an adverse effect on American society. As Jeremiah J. Twomey, of the American Legion stated, "economic overcrowding is likely to result from the introduction into this country ...of so many thousands whose capacities to make any sound contribution to our economic life cannot be said to have been enhanced by the hatreds and prejudices born of their wartime experiences." Twomey concluded his statement by saying, "while it is true that the appeal of those who would admit hundreds of thousands of immigrants touches the heart, such generosity can only be practiced at the expense of our own people, and particularly our World War II veterans. Until the problems of housing and the increasing unemployment potential have been solved, it is unwise to invite an increase in immigration." Morwin K. Hart of the National Economic Council stated that passage of the bill would be harmful to the United States because, "such immigration is generally against the interest of the American people, deceit and fraud have brought the huge numbers of refugees in the past illegally, and because increased immigration would tend to increase unemployment and make the housing problem worse." These types of statements were continually made even though the Department of Labor stated that the United States could easily absorb these immigrants. In Phillip Hannah's (Assistant Secre-
tory of Labor) testimony he demonstrated that the "admission of 400,000 displaced persons contemplated by the bill would have no harmful effect upon our economic life, based on the history of past immigration." 179

Not only was unemployment a problem referred to in the hearings, but some opponents of the bill even went as far as to argue that "Russia had planted espionage agents among the displaced persons." 180

Another part of the debate on the Stratton bill dealt with whether or not the United States had done its share in helping the D.P.'s or whether it had any obligation to do so.

Representative Stratton, the bill's sponsor stated that, "We fought in the councils of the United Nations to prevent the forcible repatriation of the displaced to Communist-dominated lands. We have a moral obligation and a heavy responsibility to follow through. I.R.O. will help maintain these D.P.'s but cannot resettle them without action by us and other countries to receive them." 181

Stratton also advocated the idea that "we cannot talk international cooperation and in practice reject it. Unless the U.S. takes its fair share of the displaced persons, the problem will remain. Other countries have indicated some willingness to take in some of the displaced, but they are awaiting our leadership." 182

John Hildring, Assistant Secretary of State, stated that although he did not consider any certain number of D.P.'s as the United States' fair share, in investigating the D.P. problem, "we finally decided that if we were going to settle the problem,
the United States was going to have to act like a leader and set the standard itself by permitting some immigration into this country before we could get other countries to cooperate with us in the solution of this problem."183

Former Supreme Court Associate Justice Owen Roberts stated that, "I have a deep conviction that if the United States makes a great gesture here in the interest of freedom and liberty, then the other countries will follow our example."184

In testifying against the theory that the U.S. had not done its fair share, some of the witnesses seem to have tried to blame the situation on the D.P.'s themselves. As John Williamson, of the Veterans of Foreign Wars stated, "the veterans of World War II, as well as World War I, must question seriously the propriety of the displaced persons in Europe who, delivered from bondage at the cost of the blood of American youth, now seek to avoid their share in the responsibility for creating a new freedom and civilization in Europe."185

Again, Jeremiah Twomey of the American Legion stated that the United States did not owe anyone anything. "These young Americans have already contributed more than they ought to have been called upon to do for the establishment of human liberty throughout the world, and have a right to expect that our American statesmen would follow up their military successes with the type of diplomatic offensives that would help the discontented, war-weary peoples of the world to work out in their own homes for themselves what our forefathers here worked out for us."186

Numerous other testimonies stated similar things. The end result being that Congress was polarized into the two lines
of opinion. "though the hearings had been held promptly and seemed to promise a swift decision, Congressional action was delayed throughout 1947. Despite a special message to Congress by Truman urging haste, the Judiciary Subcommittee failed to take any action on the Stratton bill."187

Due to the fact that the restrictionists feared that they would lose if a vote on the bill were to come up at that time, they attempted to stall. Representative Gossett of Texas, denounced the bill on the House floor by stating numerous things including that, "while a few good people remain in the D.P. camps, they are by and large the refuse of Europe. The camps are filled with bums, criminals, black-marketeers, subversives, revolutionists, and crackpots of all colors and hues."188 Gossett attempted to discredit the Stratton bill by stating that it was an avenue for the entrance of so-called "fifth columnists" into the United States.

In the Senate, Senator Revercomb tried another stalling tactic. Several Senators had called for a modified version of the Stratton bill and after this, Revercomb called for an investigation into the D.P. situation, because without it, Revercomb stated, "we will be very much handicapped in gaining information about the various bills dealing with the all-important subject of immigration in its different phases."189 "Those favoring admission of displaced persons assailed Revercomb's resolution as an inhumane delaying tactic, but after a sharp debate the Senate authorized the investigation and instructed Revercomb to report by January 10, 1948. Thus the restrictionists succeeded in postponing displaced persons legislation until after 1948."190
After the report on the D.P. conditions in Europe was made when Congress reconvened, the "American Legion reversed its stand on the hearings." Furthermore, the results of investigations into the problem in Europe reported that, "the only solution of the problem that will remove the obstacle to a German peace settlement and the constant source of friction in Germany... and will remove the present and prospective burden on the American taxpayer...is the settlement of these people in countries willing to receive them." One of these countries is the United States.

The pressure finally mounted (with the aid of another Truman request for action) so that "the Senate Judiciary Committee finally reported out a displaced persons bill on March 2, 1948." And in June, 1948 the Displaced Persons Act was passed.

However, this Act was extremely limited in scope and discriminatory. Because of this, the battle was to rage on for another two years until the Act was amended.

The bill passed in June, 1948, "reluctantly did something, but not too much, and it was shot full of snags and bars that made it discriminatory and almost unworkable. It admitted only 220,000 D.P.'s over a two-year period. It gave priorities to Baltic D.P.'s while effectively cutting off most Jews. It required that 30 percent of those admitted be farmers. It called for housing and job guarantees by sponsors. It imposed strict security screening. And it 'mortgaged' the regular immigration quotas of the future by 50 percent a year to 'repay' for D.P.'s allowed to enter the United States under its terms." One of the most controversial points of this bill was debated vigorously in the Senate and later passed as part of the bill. The bill stated that persons in the D.P. camps on or before December 22, 1945 could be served by this bill. That, of course, was the date of President Truman's directive on refugee immigration.
Opponents argued against this date on two grounds. First, they "favored the date of April 21, 1947 (which marked the closing of the displaced persons camps to any newcomers by order of General Clay), pointing out that the inclusion of this date would enhance the feasibility of administration, as displaced persons residing in the camps on that date had been catalogued and registered." Secondly, the "December date was also called discriminatory on the grounds that recent refugees would not be eligible, particularly Jews from Eastern Europe were religious persecution still prevailed."  

Although many people, including President Truman, were upset by the bill the Congress passed, Truman signed the bill into law on the basis that Congress was no longer in session that year and as the President stated, "if I refused to sign this bill, now, there would be no legislation on behalf of displaced persons until the next session of Congress." Truman, and many others, including members of the C.C.D.P. felt that the bill could be amended later and that it could do something, even if very little in the meantime.

After the bill became law, the C.C.D.P. and other groups went back to work on behalf of getting the bill amended.

In June of 1948, the drive to amend the Displaced Persons Act began. It quickly became caught-up in the political arena as cries of "discrimination" were heard from both sides. "Both political parties incorporated the D.P. issue in their 1948 political platforms, advocating liberalization".

"Early in 1949, a bill recommended by the Displaced Persons Commission, established by President Truman to administer the 1948
Act, was introduced by Representative Celler, Democrat of New York, in the House and by Senators McGrath, Democrat of Rhode Island, and Neely, Democrat of West Virginia in the Senate. 197

On March 25, 1949, hearings opened on the proposed amendments to the Displaced Persons Act. 200 At the opening, Ugo Carusi, Chairman of the Displaced Persons Commission testified that there were still about "750,000 D.P.'s in the American, British, and French Zones of Germany, Austria and Italy." 201

Testimony by witnesses seemed this time to be more in favor of allowing the D.P.'s in. At least, there were less restrictionist testimonies than in the previous hearings on the Stratton bill. The Arguments posed by the restrictionists were, at best, weak. Their defense was basically the same as it was at the Stratton bill hearings, and this time the pressure from the other side was mounting. For example, Charles Miller, District of Columbia Secretary for the Daughters of America which claimed to represent 143,000, testified that his organization passed a resolution calling for a complete, temporary ban on immigration. They based this judgement on the fact that "a shortage of housing was present and the unemployment level was too high." 202

As the pressure mounted from all angles to let the D.P.'s in, Senator Pat McCarran of Nevada, Chairman of the Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary, which was responsible for the report on the proposed amendment, did everything he could to stall making a report. He managed to keep this bill in committee for nearly a year.

"In this campaign of obfuscation, McCarran held 20 committee
hearings in the summer and early fall of 1948. He then went to Europe for almost two months to ferret out the 'fraud', 'mismanagement', 'security leaks', and the like which he charged against the administration of the program set up under the 1948 act, even though hardly any D.P.'s were coming in through its operation." While in Europe, McCarran even conducted hearings there which were printed with the other hearings on the bill.

Finally, on January 25, 1950 McCarran's committee reported the bill. The Judiciary Committee approved a heavily amended version of the Celler bill which retained many of the restrictive features of the existing act. A later cut-off date of January 1, 1949 was retained, although the Baltic and agricultural priorities were reinstated.

The most controversial feature of the amendment was the "provision which redefined displaced persons to include the Volksdeutsche (persons of German ethnic origin). Congress had accepted the I.R.O. definition which had excluded the Volksdeutsche, and dealt with them separately by giving them a preference under the German and Austrian quotas."

In response to this, a group of Senators backed by Senator Lehman of New York pushed for a substitute bill which was based on the same grounds as the original Celler bill.

This substitutive bill had "removed the Baltic and agricultural preferences...and the provisions discriminating against Jews. Refugees such as Greeks and Volksdeutsche created by the aftermath of the war were included in limited numbers. An overall figure of 415,744 persons was set as the new ceiling of admissible D.P.'s."
"McCarran and his cohorts did everything possible to hold up action on the bill.... In an unprecedented 13-hour session, during which over 100 attempts to stop the bill by the restricitonists failed, the Senate passed the bill on April 8, 1950. The conference version worked out by the House was almost identical and was passed by both bodies on June 6 and 7. On June 16, 1950, the President signed it into law."\(^{208}\)

A four-year battle had finally come to an end. However, the battle had actually gone on for over 26 years. This was the first time since 1924, that our immigration laws were liberalized. A concrete plan for the displaced persons was now in full swing.

The following table has been taken from the *Congressional Record*.\(^{209}\) It compares and contrasts the differences in the two versions of the D.P. Act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1948 Act</th>
<th>Amended Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.R.O. Displaced Persons</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>387,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Expellees (volksdeutsche)</td>
<td>27,377</td>
<td>54,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish Veterans</td>
<td></td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Displaced Persons</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Refugees from China</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezia-Guilia Refugees</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Displaced Orphans</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted Orphans</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Refugees</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjustment of Status of D.P.'s in the United States</strong></td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>247,377</td>
<td>415,744</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charged to Quota | 405,744 |
Nonquota (Children) | 10,000 |
Total | 415,744 |
B. EXECUTIVE BRANCH

1. PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN

Of the two Presidents in office during the World War II Era, Harry S. Truman was the most sympathetic toward the plight of displaced persons in Europe. For it was during the Truman Administration that concrete action was taken on behalf of the refugees. It was also during that Administration that legislation was passed permitting the admission of over 400,000 displaced persons.

On April 12, 1945, Truman assumed the duties of the Presidency following the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Truman began working on the D.P. situation quite early, as he wrote in his diary of April 15, 1952,

"Yesterday I welcomed the last Displaced Person and his family to the United States.... When I was at Potsdam (July, 1945) I looked into the displaced person situation. At that time there were 1,200,000 of them from all the countries named in Eastern Europe. After I arrived at Washington, I asked Dick Russell, Chairman of the immigration committee in the Senate, and his opposite number in the House...to go to Germany and then see me about a plan for taking care of them.... The two reported that we had enough 'furriners' in this country and we needed no more, I reminded them that 'displaced persons' made this great nation what it is."210

Truman saw the needs of the D.P.'s and began taking action to help them. "One means by which President Truman sought to relieve the distress was by issuing a directive on December 22, 1945, that would enable refugees and displaced persons to obtain immigrant visas to the United States within the limits of the immigration quota law. While this Presidential directive made little immediate impact on relieving the refugee problem, it presaged Truman's later actions and the period during which
the basic features of the quota law were inexorably changed and ultimately nullified." 211

Prior to the issuance of the directive on refugee immigration, Truman had written a letter to General Eisenhower concerning the conditions of the displaced persons in camps in Germany. Truman was prompted to write this letter by reading Earl G. Harrison's report on the conditions of the camps. The letter stated that "the announced policy has been to give such (displaced) persons preference over the German civilian population in housing. But the practice seems to be quite another thing." 212 Truman ordered Eisenhower to requisition housing from the German civilian population because they "cannot escape responsibility for what they have brought upon themselves." 213 Truman closed by stating that "we must make clear to the German people that we thoroughly abhor the Nazi policies of hatred and persecution. We have no better opportunity to demonstrate this than by the manner in which we ourselves actually treat the survivors remaining in Germany." 214

After the President had taken care of the problems in the D.P. camps, he turned his energies toward other aspects of the refugee problem. One of these aspects was the problem of the Jewish D.P.'s. Whereas Franklin Roosevelt did not want to put pressure on the British to admit Jewish refugees from Europe into Palestine, Truman saw no reason to hold back on the British.

Of course, it can be argued that Roosevelt was in a different situation than Truman simply due to the fact that the war was over when Truman got involved. However, had Roosevelt gotten the British to open up Palestine, and evacuate Jews, many of the pre-war problems may have been solved.
In any case, President Truman did try to get the gates to Palestine opened. As he stated, "it will be recalled that when Mr. Harrison reported on the conditions of the displaced persons in Europe, I immediately urged that steps be taken to relieve the situation of these persons to the extent of admitting 100,000 Jews into Palestine."\(^{215}\)

The British response to this was less than favorable. The British were quick to point out that the United States had not done its fair share in admitting D.P.'s prior to this. However, Truman's initiative resulted in the formation of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.

The President was aware of the fact that the British were correct in their statement about the United States policy toward the refugees. Therefore, he turned his energies toward home and began pushing for legislation to allow these people into the United States.

Why did Truman concern himself with the Jews and the situation in Palestine so deeply? As Truman stated, "the fate of the Jewish victims of Hitlerism was a matter of deep personal concern to me. I have always been disturbed by the tragedy of people who have been made victims of intolerance and fanaticism because of their race, color, or religion."\(^{216}\) Truman further stated that he knew Russia and Poland had been terrible persecutors of the Jews, but that the Nazi behavior was "one of the most shocking crimes of all times."\(^{217}\) As Truman said, "I was fully aware of the Arabs' hostility to Jewish settlement in Palestine, but, like many Americans, I was troubled by the plight of the Jewish people in Europe."\(^{218}\) This prompted the President to take action where
others had refused to do so previously.

During the period of negotiations on Palestine, the President was subject to personal attacks by the British, but he did not back down. The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine recommended partitioning Palestine into two states; one Arab, the other Jewish. Although the Arabs were quite hostile to this idea and threatened war in the face of it, Truman instructed the State Department to support the partition plan.219

Next, the President began focusing on getting legislation passed in favor of displaced persons immigration to the United States. Unlike President Roosevelt’s inexplicable silence in regard to legislation on the problem, Truman did not hesitate to speak to Congress on these matters. Whereas Roosevelt would not press Congress for any action in this respect, Truman did not feel constrained by domestic politics to remain silent.

In his State of the Union message on January 6, 1947, the President urged Congress to pass D.P. legislation. "So far as admitting displaced persons is concerned, I do not feel that the United States has done its part. Only about 5,000 of them have entered this country since May, 1946.... Congressional assistance in the form of new legislation is needed. I urge the Congress to turn its attention to this world problem in an effort to find ways whereby we can fulfill our responsibilities to these thousands of homeless and suffering refugees of all faiths."220

In the six months which passed after the State of the Union Address Congress had done nothing. On July 7, 1947, Truman sent a special message to Congress regarding the displaced persons matter. In this message, the President stated,
"The only civilized course is to enable these people to take new roots in friendly soil. Already certain countries of Western Europe and Latin America have opened their doors to substantial numbers of these displaced persons.... We ourselves should admit a substantial number as immigrants. We have not yet been able to do this because our present statutory quotas applicable to the Eastern European areas from which most of these people come are wholly inadequate for this purpose. Special legislation limited to this particular emergency will therefore be necessary...."22

Congress finally passed the Displaced Persons Act in 1948. However, the Act was not what the President had wanted. Upon signing the Act, the President explained his reasons for doing so and urged the Congress once again to act on the problem. This time, by revising the act. As the President stated on June 25, 1948, "it is with very great reluctance that I signed the Displaced Persons Act. If the Congress were still in session, I would return this bill without my approval and urge that a fairer, more humane bill be passed. In its present form, this bill is flagrantly discriminatory". The President explained his reasoning for signing the bill by stating that, "if I refused to sign this bill now, there would be no legislation on behalf of displaced persons until the next session of the Congress."223 The President berated the Congress in his statement for their poor action on this bill.

A large portion of the President's statement dealt with the fact that the bill discriminated against Jews and Catholics.

"The primary device used to discriminate against Jewish displaced persons is the provision restricting eligibility to those displaced persons who entered Germany, Austria or Italy on or before December 22, 1945. Most of the Jewish displaced persons who had entered Germany, Austria or Italy by that time had already left; and most of the Jewish displaced persons in those areas arrived there after December
22, 1945.... More than 90% of the remaining Jewish displaced persons are definitely ex-  
cluded."

The President also complained of discrimination against Catholics. "Many anti-Communist refugees of Catholic faith fled into the American zones after December 22, 1945, in order to escape persecution in countries dominated by a communist form of government. These too are barred by the December 22, 1945 dateline."225

The President was also dissatisfied with the fact that the bill charged the D.P.'s to the quotas. In light of these reasons, the President asked Congress to amend the act when it reconvened.

As Truman campaigned for the Presidency in 1948, he used this time to berate the "Republican 80th Congress that doesn't want the victims of World War II to come to the United States and get a fresh start in life."226

Truman's style of public denouncement of the Congress in regard to the D.P. Act was something totally different from that of President Roosevelt. While F.D.R. never spoke against Congress on this subject, and never even stated his support for such things as the Wagner-Rogers Act, Truman used his position to try and sway Congress. It seems as though Roosevelt was worried about his political position more than Truman was. Roosevelt was afraid of the restrictionist sentiment going against him. Truman did not use any stalling devices like Roosevelt did (The Evian Conference, for example).

Of course, one must consider the fact that Truman had popular support in regard to displaced persons legislation as time progressed whereas Roosevelt did not. Truman was also concerned with
a different type of foreign policy than Roosevelt was. As he stated in his memoirs,

"I had a very good picture of what a revival of isolationism would mean for the world. After World War II it was clear that without American participation there was no power capable of meeting Russia as an equal. If we were to turn our back on the world, areas weakened and divided as a result of the war would fall into Soviet orbit without much effort on the part of the Russians."**22**

It is possible that Truman saw aiding the displaced persons as a way for the United States to demonstrate its leadership in, and care for, the world.
2. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The attitudes and actions of the Department of State in the post-war years seemed to change as time progressed. Of course, much of the work with displaced persons was handled by the Displaced Persons Commission. However, the behavior of State itself in this period was in some ways similar to its behavior during the war years. Apparently, the bureaucratic design of the Department renders it subject to weak control by its head. This resulted in poor treatment of D.P.'s trying to immigrate for quite a while.

The Department of State was headed by two secretaries in the post-war era. James F. Byrnes was the first, serving from 1945 to 1947 and General George C. Marshall was the second serving throughout the duration of the era. These men were favorable toward immigration of displaced persons into the United States.

Secretary Byrnes was in favor of aiding the D.P.'s. As he remarked in his memoirs, in regard to a meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister Molotov. "I told Molotov that we took the position that we must give asylum to the political refugees." There were other occasions also, when Byrnes stated that he favored taking care of the refugees.

Secretary Marshall was also in favor of admitting the displaced persons into the United States. As he testified at the hearings on the Stratton bill,

"In our discussions with other countries, we are constantly met with the question, "What is the United States, which is urging others to accept these people as useful and desirable
immigrants, doing about accepting a part of them itself? If we practice what we preach, if we admit a substantial number of these people as immigrants, then with what others are already doing and will do, we can actually bring an end to this tragic situation. In so doing, we will also confirm our moral leadership and demonstrate that we are not retreating behind the Atlantic Ocean." 229

Marshall was pushing for the passage of this legislation.

However, in the war years, it was not the Secretary of State himself that attempted to block aid to the D.P.'s. Cordell Hull was not trying to keep the D.P.'s out, it was Breckinridge Long and the people under him that were causing the problems.

It seems that in this case, history was destined to repeat itself. This time, however, the problem was more or less with the consuls themselves. In regard to the Truman directive, "the spirit in which the directive had been issued was lost in the maelstrom of regulation superimposed by the consular and immigration services. Hapless displaced persons were their victims." 230

Although in several instances the bureaucratic problems were solved here in the United States, "the larger and more diverse bureaucracy in Europe functioned neither as smoothly nor as swiftly for refugees outside the American continent." 231 Some of the problems in regard to this were attributed to Ugo Carusi, Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Displaced Persons. Among other things, "Carusi and his colleagues decided arbitrarily that December 22, 1945, would be the day prior to which determination of D.P. status would be made 'in order to avoid an influx of people' into the United States zones of occupation...." 232 The result of this was that "concentration camp survivors who had left Germany for countries
of origin to seek family members and returned to the United States zone after that date, were thus declared ineligible, as were all those who found themselves in the British, French or Russian zones.\textsuperscript{233}

It was not Carusi alone, however, that caused many of the problems in processing the displaced persons. "Processing by consuls was inordinately slow. In their interpretation of the directive in relation to the quota law they demanded that original certificates or certified copies from the issuing authorities attesting to place of birth, marriage, evidence of death of a spouse, etc. be provided all or most of which were difficult, if not impossible to obtain."\textsuperscript{234}

This was not the only obstacle provided by the consuls. "Consuls were arbitrary in the use of the 'wide latitude and discretionary powers' with which they were vested. They also established their own definitions of persons eligible to receive visas as D.P.'s.... A Polish visa applicant and his son, the only survivors of a family incarcerated by the Russians and then the Germans were refused visas because they 'had not been persecuted enough'...."\textsuperscript{235}

"In Vienna, Jews persecuted by the Nazis and deprived of their property were declared ineligible under the terms of the directive because they had returned to their former domiciliary area, despite the fact that both the United States Army and U.N.R.R.A. had recognized their D.P. status and had registered them as such. Almost a year passed before the consul in Vienna was persuaded to revise his stand on the eligibility of Viennese Jews and began to process their visa applications."\textsuperscript{235}

Because of these actions the goals of the Truman directive were not reached. It was not until after passage of the Displaced Persons Act that things began moving at a reasonable speed.
The domestic offices of the Department of State seemed to look at the displaced persons from an angle which changed with the times. In other words, opinions of the Department were different during different stages of the post-war era. One example of this concerns the Office of Public Affairs.

In March, 1947, prior to the passage of the Displaced Persons Act, the Office of Public Affairs published a pamphlet in its series of "Foreign Affairs Background Summaries" entitled The International Refugee Organization. This pamphlet was designed to give "background information on refugees and displaced persons". The overall tone of the pamphlet seems to be slightly negative. The pamphlet states such things as "the care and maintenance of these million and a quarter Refugees and displaced persons is a burden on occupation authorities and a continuing cost to taxpayers." The pamphlet also says that "American policy favors the resettlement of 100,000 Jews in Palestine. The remainder of the refugees and displaced persons need to be resettled elsewhere throughout the world."

Nearly a year later, in January, 1948, the same office printed another pamphlet entitled Displaced Persons. Of course, in this relatively short period of time sentiment toward admission of D.P.'s had changed.

This pamphlet tries to demonstrate how the stereotypes against D.P.'s are false. It then proceeds to explain that special legislation is necessary to admit the D.P.'s. It quotes the President's special message to Congress (July 7, 1947) in which Truman appealed for legislative action. It even goes so far to say that "it is not expected that any legislation which may be approved by the
Congress to allow immigration of displaced persons to this country will add appreciably to the housing problem in the United States.258

In other words, in a period of nine months the Office of Public Affairs of the State Department completely turned its attitude around.

The point being made is that although the heads of the State Department publicly came out in favor of D.P. immigration, their attitudes did not necessarily prevail through the ranks of the Department. It seemed as though the lower ranking officials (including consuls), followed the general prevailing American sentiment at the time. When public sentiment changed in favor of D.P. admission, lower level State Department sentiment changed also.

It seems as though the Secretaries of State had neither little knowledge nor concern with how their officers handled European refugees. This was the case both during and after the war. The result of this was that less refugees were admitted into the United States than could have been. Thousands suffered due to disorganization in the bureaucracy of the Department of State.
The Department of War worked very closely with the displaced persons after the war. The United States Army had the responsibility of taking care of the displaced persons in the United States Zone. Although other organizations were established (such as U.N.R.R.A.) for the purpose of aiding the D.P.'s, the Army still retained ultimate control and authority over these people.

The United States Zonal Agreement with U.N.R.R.A. stated that,

"The Commanding General, United States Forces, European Theatre (U.S.F.E.T.), retains over-all responsibility for the care, control, and movement of displaced persons in the United States Zone. U.N.R.R.A., subject to the laws, general orders, rules, and regulations, directives and overall supervision of the commanding general, U.S.F.E.T., will to the extent permitted by the resolutions of the U.N.R.R.A. Council, perform designated functions relating to displaced persons within the United States Zone."

Therefore, power was given to U.N.R.R.A., although ultimate responsibility for making decisions concerning the D.P.'s was retained by the Army.

The Army had to rely on itself at the beginning of the D.P. operations at liberation. "Although U.N.R.R.A. had given substantial assistance to the displaced persons during the summer of 1945, there had been an unfortunate three months delay in the assignment of its personnel, with the result that U.N.R.R.A. did not reach full strength during the period of mass repatriation when help was most urgently needed."

Much debate has been focused on whether or not the Army treated the displaced persons, especially Jewish displaced persons fairly. Much resentment on the part of Army personnel seemed to stem toward the Jewish D.P.'s partly due to the fact that they did
not want to be treated as members of the other nationality groups such as Germans, Poles, Czechs, etc. The reason that the Jewish D.P.'s felt this way was because they felt that there was no one area in Europe to which they could return without being persecuted again.

Earl G. Harrison toured the displaced persons centers in 1945 and reported to President Truman on the conditions of the camps. Following the report, Harrison published the results of it. He focused on one segment of the displaced persons, the Jewish D.P.'s. Harrison explained that, "in spite of chaotic communication and transportation conditions after V-E day, over 4,000,000 of the 6,500,000 exiles had been moved out of Germany by July, and the number continued to climb. By late October about one million remained."²⁴¹

Harrison continued,

"...some are in law and in fact stateless. Some are unwilling to live under Russian-dominated regimes in Poland and Yugoslavia, or in Baltic countries that are now part of the U.S.S.R.... As the political picture becomes clearer, many will doubtless change their minds and seek repatriation. It has been apparent for some months, however, that eventually we shall come down to a hard core of at least one hundred thousand people, for whom some solution outside the gigantic repatriation program must be found. In the main, they will be Polish, Hungarian, Rumanian, and Austrian Jews."²⁴²

Harrison stated that most of the "Jews felt that they were being treated not as our fellow-fighters against totalitarianism, but much more like prisoners."²⁴³ Harrison reported to President Truman that "as matters now stand, we appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them, except that we do not exterminate them."²⁴⁴ Harrison recommended that the Jews be evacuated.
"He also urged immigration under existing laws into the United States, and reported that 'many' Jews wished to go to Palestine because they realized that their opportunity to be admitted into the United States or into other countries in the Western Hemisphere was limited."245

In light of the terrible conditions in the camps which the Harrison report detailed, President Truman wrote General Eisenhower on August 31, 1945 in Germany.

In his letter, Truman stated that, "while Mr. Harrison makes due allowance for the fact that during the early days of liberation, the huge task of mass repatriation required main attention, he reports conditions which now exist and which require prompt remedy. These conditions...are not in conformity with policies promulgated by S.H.A.E.F. (Supreme High Command-Allied Expeditionary Forces).... In other words, the policies are not being carried out by some of your subordinate officers."246

The President went on to describe some examples of this complaint. He advised Eisenhower to clean up the conditions because, as he quoted from Harrison's report, "one is led to wonder whether the German people, seeing this, are not supposing that we are following or at least condoning Nazi policy."247 He closed by stating that we "have a responsibility toward these victims of persecution and tyranny who are in our zone."248

General Eisenhower "later reported that real efforts were being made to improve the conditions of the Jews."249 Part of these efforts included "a series of orders establishing special centers for Jews with Jewish administrators, providing special and larger rations, and initiating other means to alleviate the lots of the Jews. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Comm-
ittee (A.J.J.D.C. or "Joint"), for all practical purposes was put in charge of the Jews in the United States Zones, and Eisenhower appointed a special Adviser on Jewish Affairs.250

Eisenhower issued an order which contained the major policies related to the treatment of displaced persons. Included in this was an order for frequent inspection of the commanders (of the camps). The order stated that those who were incompetent should be "instantly relieved".251

Eisenhower himself visited some of the camps and replied to President Truman's letter and the Harrison report. In his reply, Eisenhower stated that "since Mr. Harrison's visit in July many changes have taken place with respect to the condition of Jewish and other displaced persons. Except for temporarily crowded conditions...housing is on a reasonable basis. Nevertheless efforts to improve their condition continue unabated. Subordinate commanders are under orders to requisition German houses, grounds, and other facilities without hesitation...."252

Eisenhower further stated that "special centers have been established for Jewish displaced persons.... On July 25, 1945, Dr. Rabbi Israel Goldstein, President of the United Jewish Appeal, recommended that non-repatriatable Jews be separated from other stateless people,...in exclusively Jewish centers...the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee was called upon to supervise the establishment of these centers."253

Eisenhower closed by saying that "in certain instances we have fallen below standard, but I should like to point out that a whole army has been faced with the intricate problems of re-adjusting from combat to mass repatriation, and then to the pres-
ent static phase with its unique welfare problems."^{254}

In the summer of 1945, mass migrations of Polish Jews, who were being subjected to a resurgence of anti-Semitism in that country began migrating to occupied Germany and Austria. Most of these people went into the United States Zones. "The military authorities of the United States Zones of Germany and Austria took no action during the remainder of 1945 to stop the infiltration of Jews. On the contrary, as a result of Truman's expressed sympathy for Jews and the growing conviction that all European Jews were properly entitled to special consideration as victims of German persecution, the military authorities decided during December to continue special care for all Jews and to accommodate them in separate centers."^{255}

Leonard Dinnerstein, in his article, "The U.S. Army and the Jews: Policies Toward the Displaced Persons After World War II," contends that treatment of these D.P.'s was not quite as good as most people felt it was. He attributes most of this to lower-ranking military personnel who were not as concerned about Jewish D.P.'s as the superiors were.

Dinnerstein states that "despite initial shortages and administrative confusion, the Army did a generally creditable job. Unfortunately, through the initial phases, and later stabilization period, subordinate military personnel often showed little awareness of the particular difficulties encountered by Jewish Displaced Persons. This lack of sympathy compounded the enormous problems already burdening the Jews."^{256}

Dinnerstein claims that "one of the Army's first mistakes was to ignore that section of the Handbook for Military Government
in Germany, prepared by S.H.A.E.F. . . . which mandated that "inmates of concentration camps should be, if under restraint by the German authorities on racial, political, or religious grounds treated as United Nations displaced persons." Dinnerstein argues that officers who were not concerned about this order, "segregated the D.P.'s according to nationality; hence German, Austrian, Hungarian, Roumanian, Bulgarian, and Italian Jews were labeled former 'enemy nationals' not entitled to the special care given to citizens of U.N. countries." 

Dinnerstein states that it was reports such as this that prompted the intervention of Truman and caused him to send Harrison to Europe to investigate. Therefore, these problems occurred before Truman's letter reached Eisenhower. Dinnerstein agrees that Eisenhower's swift action corrected many of the problems in the D.P. centers. However, Dinnerstein maintains that "despite the improvement, 'many of General Eisenhower's policies were pigeon-holed and, in some instances, deliberately overlooked by commanders in the field.'" 

One such example was that of the third army area under the command of General George S. Patton. "Rabbi Judah Nadich, one of Eisenhower's Jewish Advisors, toured the area in October, 1945, and discovered that Jews escaping from Poland were not accepted into the D.P. camps but non-Jewish Poles were. This was not an isolated example. General Eisenhower and his deputy, General Walter Bedell Smith, found themselves constantly prodding Patton to treat the D.P.'s decently." 

"Subordinate commanders also found their orders ignored or sabotaged by junior officers. In 1946, a U.N. observer, Ira Hirschmann, claimed that one camp, Funk Caserne, had degenerated
into indescribable chaos. Originally intended as a transition center it became a de facto D.P. facility. A latrine intended for the use of ten to twelve people serviced 1800; a place for 300 beds contained 800...." The Army commander who received Hirschmann's complaint was under the impression that the camp had been abandoned. After the complaint was received the camp was ordered closed within a few days.

Finally, Dinnerstein attributes many of the problems to the fact that the American G.I.'s had little tolerance for the D.P.'s.

"Jewish observers continually reported G.I.'s as being unusually rough towards, and unsympathetic to, the displaced persons. Many American soldiers seemed to agree with the Germans that the Jews were responsible for their own plight. An American sergeant decided 'Jews wore no damn goos,' and therefore, 'he ain't gonna give them anymore food,' and a lieutenant complained that, 'we feed and house the refugees yet, instead of showing their gratitude...they treat us as if we were their jailors'. An American Jewish Committee observer discovered the results of some troop attitude surveys from an officer 'forbidden by his superiors from releasing them'. The representative later wrote that 'a very high proportion of G.I.'s believe, apparently, that Hitler was partly right in his treatment of the Jews.'

The Army attempted to combat this anti-semitism through different publications but the effects of these were unlikely to be helpful.

Much of the poor relations between Army personnel and all the D.P.'s in general was attributable to the tensions between the two groups due to the adverse conditions which all, D.P.'s especially, were facing. For example, as General Lucius D. Clay, deputy to General Eisenhower for Military Government stated,
"Nineteen forty-seven was a difficult year for the D.P.'s. Resettlement was negligible and there seemed little hope of their finding new homes and opportunities. In the face of despair, morale in the camps dropped off and there was a consequent breakdown in character which led to black market and similar activities. Reports concerning the extent of these activities were often exaggerated, and considering the conditions under which these people lived, their behavior was most creditable."263

Much credit toward aid for the displaced persons must be given to the voluntary agencies, particularly the A.J.J.D.C., which worked closely with the Army and U.N.R.R.A. in aiding the D.P.'s.

"After the establishment of Israel there was a steady and well-organized migration of Jews from the Western Zones of Germany and Austria, and from Italy. The 250,000 Jews estimated to be in this area during 1947 were rapidly moved to the new state, although infiltration of other Jews from central Europe continued until June, 1949. By 31 December 1949, the number dropped to 61,000 persons. By the end of 1950 to 39,000. During 1951 migrations to the U.S., Israel and elsewhere took place. The Jewish refugee problem in the Western Zones of Germany and Austria and in Italy could be said to have come to an end."264

The U.S. Army had taken care of the D.P.'s. The case of Army treatment of these people was typical of most U.S. behavior in similar situations. The State Department heads had officially been in favor of D.P. aid, yet their subordinates managed to interfere. This was true for the Army also. The Army completed its job. Generals Eisenhower and Clay did put their efforts into caring for the D.P.'s as best as they could. Whether or not their subordinates did remains questionable.
Although it would seem that public opinion in the United States toward D.P.'s would have changed drastically in the United States after the war, the change was slow to come.

The limited amount of information available through public opinion polls reveals how slowly the change did come.

On June 26, 1946, the American Institute of Public Opinion asked, "Would you approve or disapprove a plan to require each nation to take in a given number of Jewish and other European refugees, based upon the size and population of each nation?" The responses were that "40% of the sample approved, 49% disapproved and 11% had no opinion." 265

On August 28, 1946, A.I.P.O. asked the same question. In a period of two months, the statistics changed slightly. This time "37% approved, 48% disapproved and 15% had no opinion." 266

On the same day, A.I.P.O. also asked, "President Truman plans to ask Congress to allow more Jewish and other European refugees to come to the United States to live than are now allowed under the law. Would you approve or disapprove of this idea?" "16% said they would approve, 12% said they had no opinion, and an overwhelming 72% disapproved." 267

On September 25, 1946, A.I.P.O. asked, "About a million Polish people, Jews, and other displaced persons must find new homes in different countries. Do you think the United States should let any of these displaced persons enter the country? " 38% responded yes, 6% had no opinion, and 58% said no." 268

The Gallup Poll reported on January 13, 1946 that the "public
favors decreased immigration, and that of prospective immigrants, admittance of Dutch, Scandinavians, Belgians and English is preferred."

"The conviction that the United States must do its part in offering resettlement opportunities to the displaced persons did not spring into full bloom on the part of the American people overnight. Too few people knew about the situation and too few cared." Even over a year after the war had ended, public opinion was not in favor of refugee immigration. As the surveys discussed above show, as of August, 1946, the public did not even support President Truman's request to let D.P.'s enter the United States.

"As the facts began to come in, concern did manifest itself in certain quarters and steadily increased. The ethnic groups whose nationality backgrounds were akin to those in the D.P. camps were among the first to feel that something should be done." Religious groups, particularly Catholic and Jewish, began to exert increasing pressure on government officials, particularly Congressmen.

Voluntary organizations such as the American Friends Service Committee (A.F.S.C.) and the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons (C.C.D.P.), attempted to educate the public on the problems of D.P.'s throughout the period. For example, A.F.S.C. published such brochures as The Problem of 12 Million German Refugees in Today's Germany.

The C.C.D.P. worked extremely hard at alerting the American public to the D.P. situation.
"At the end of the war, the public was unaware of the very existence of displaced persons.... When most of the D.P.'s were re-patriated the public was slow to grasp the nature of the remaining D.P.'s dilemma and to comprehend why that 'hard core' would not go home. On these points, the C.C.D.P. had to hammer again and again, telling and re-telling the facts and explaining the alternatives. The cumulative effects of this exposition, supplemented many fold by other writers, commentators and media of communication, finally hit their mark...the public in general was at last aware of the issue."

The press, of course, had an effect on swaying the attitudes of Americans. It launched out vigorously against the restrictionist sentiment that had prevailed in the early years after the war. "Life magazine reflected the opinion of many when it declared editorially on September 23, 1946 that the most shocking fact about the plight of these displaced persons is not that they are interred. It is the fact that the United States Government and people have the means to open the door for many of them, but have not done so.... If we are to remain the leading nation of our world, we also have a deep moral obligation not to be too exclusive."

"Press opinion was generally sympathetic to plans for permitting entrance of displaced persons into the United States. The New York Times took the position on October 1, 1946 that 'our fighting men displayed during the war a devotion to human liberty. Their relatives at home felt the same devotion. For Europe's displaced populations the war is not yet triumphant. We can speak more convincingly for freedom everywhere when we have done our fair share - even more than our fair share - to bring real freedom to those who have suffered most.'"

"A major obstacle in the public domain was what may well be called a post-war reaction of hysteria, culminating in a phobia about security." It appears that many American citizens were afraid that admission of refugees meant admission of communists. If this was not a concern of the citizens of the United States,
then housing and unemployment were. As previously discussed, William Groen, President of the A.F.L. testified at the Stratton bill hearings that entrance of these D.P.'s into the United States would not hurt the economy.

The C.C.D.P. tried to dissuade the worries of housing problems. "The C.C.D.P. simply admitted that there was a temporary shortage, which would mean that initial shelter for the D.P.'s who had no relatives or friends would probably not be too satisfactory. In due course, they would find adequate housing and might even contribute to the housing construction industry."277

Finally, public opinion began to turn around. "Both political parties incorporated the D.P. issue into their 1948 political platforms, advocating liberalization."278

At the hearings of the Senate Subcommittee to amend the Displaced Persons Act in 1950, the effects of this changed attitude became more obvious. Many more witnesses were in favor of this legislation than in the previous hearings which were held on other proposed D.P. immigration bills.

As a result of this legislation, "major segments of the American people were changed.... Labor, which for years had opposed immigration, now saw immigrants in a new light.... From then on, labor took a consistently liberal attitude toward immigration reform."279

There were several contributing factors to the changing attitudes of Americans. The United States finally realized that by allowing D.P.'s to enter, the other nations would do their share. It became apparent after the war, that the U.S.S.R. was the only other major power to contend with. Because of this, Americans realized the need to show their nation as a leader. It was felt that
other weaker nations would then follow the United States. Americans wanted to show that we were the champions of free people, unlike the Russians. Finally, the United States realized that the only way to have a lasting peace in Europe would be to evacuate the D.P.'s. The U.S. was trying to advance its policies for peace in Western Europe. As the final report of the Displaced Persons Commission stated, "in a very real sense, a displaced persons program was necessary to help preserve the peace". American citizens realized this and it helped to change their opinions on admission of D.P.'s here.
V. CONCLUSIONS

American attitudes and actions with regard to the refugee crisis in the era of the Second World War is not something which the United States should be proud of. It took this nation twenty-six years to revise its discriminatory immigration policy. Seventeen of those twenty-six years were extremely difficult times for millions of people in Europe. At this same time, the United States had room for immigrants, but would not take them.

Of course, there is no way to measure the effect of such a restrictive policy. We cannot determine how many lives would have been saved or how much less suffering there would have been on the part of the victims. It is safe to assume that a substantial number could have been saved had the United States and the other western nations done something to liberalize their immigration policies. However, there are many incalculable factors which would have taken their toll. For example, would the Germans have sunk the ships carrying the refugees to safety if they could have been admitted here? They did torpedo at least two, that we are aware of. Furthermore, we do not know what course of action the Germans would have taken if the western democracies had agreed to take the refugees.

There are several conclusions which we can draw in regard to this. First of all, it has been stated time and again that Hitler's original plan was to purge Greater Germany of Jews and other "undesirables" by forced emigration. When the democracies did not cooperate, and the emigration program appeared to the Germans to be taking place too slowly, the extermination program was invoked.
If this is true, then the number who could have been saved had they had somewhere to go, would most likely have been in the millions. This does not mean that millions would have come to the United States, but it does mean that millions would have been spread across the western hemisphere.

Of course, this is all speculation. If Hitler really had intended to purge the Jews and others from Germany only through emigration, then why did he lock many of them in concentration camps years before the war broke out.

It should seem apparent that the Germans knew, from the beginning, that no other nation would take the expellees. Hitler demonstrated this through the voyage of the St. Louis. This proved that even in 1939, no one would accept these expellees. By sending a relatively small number of refugees (936) to the West and seeing them refused admission, that proved that even larger groups were destined for doom. In this way, the Germans could use the United States and other nations as a scapegoat by saying that Germany tried to send them to the Americas, but the Americans did not let them in. The voyage of the St. Louis was supposed to end in Cuba. When Cuba refused to admit the passengers, the ship drifted off of the coast of Miami for several days, but our government did nothing to aid those people.

Naturally, it was hard for those Americans who were at home leading normal lives to imagine what the type of suffering that these people were forced to endure was like. However, it is difficult to understand the apathy of the United States when bringing the refugees in would not have had an adverse effect on the economy. Reports of what was going on in Germany were getting out. If people here could not have believed them in the beginning of the
crisis, then surely by 1942 they must have. Henry Morgenthau, Jr. stated that our government had confirmed reports of the atrocities by 1942. Even by that time, a policy still was not invoked to aid the refugees. The American people simply were not motivated to aid these people. The restrictionist ideals carried over from the nineteen-twenties seemed to have worked themselves into American feeling so well that no amount of oppression in Europe could appear bad enough to revise the restrictionist sentiment.

The fact that our government did not act is not an admirable fact either. It seems as though bureaucracy here worked so well that it seemed to sanction anti-refugee policy almost by itself. In at least two cases, the heads of departments were not anti-refugee, but the actions carried on in those departments seems to have been. In the case of the Department of State, Cordell Hull was not aware of the occurrences in his department until an outsider informed him of them. For quite a period of time, Breckinridge Long and his associates were able to carry out a policy which was unfavorable to the refugees trying to get to the United States.

Long and others in the State Department were quite successful with their plan. How anyone could be so insensitive as to stifle reports of the atrocities in Europe that were coming in at the time of Long's rule is a wonder. Or maybe it isn't. Numerous people dropped hints of anti-semitism on the part of Long throughout his administration.

Yet the case of Breckinridge Long and the State Department was not the only one of its kind. In the Department of War a similar
Although General Eisenhower had issued instructions to clean-up the displaced persons camps and operations, his subordinate personnel went about things in their own way. Orders were evaded and meant nothing when the D.P.'s and G.I.'s were on a one to one basis. It is a reasonable assumption to say that anti-Semitism played a part here also.

Franklin D. Roosevelt did his part to prevent refugee immigration also. If he didn't intentionally try to prevent it, his behavior seemed to make it appear that he wanted to do so. Although F.D.R. may have been a good leader in most other respects, his refugee policies were hardly beneficial for the victims of German oppression. Roosevelt's dealings with the refugee crisis were little more than stalling tactics to postpone solutions to the problem almost indefinitely. The Evian Conference was a mockery as was the Bermuda Conference. F.D.R. knew that through these conferences he could successfully stall the problem by making it appear that a solution was being worked out.

And if an international solution to the problem was not possible, F.D.R. was not willing to invoke a domestic solution. Roosevelt knew how to play politics. He was not about to jeopardize his position or lose any power or popularity by allowing D.P.'s from Europe into this country. By using his stalling tactics, he was able to appease those on both sides of the issue. The restrictionists could be told that what he was doing was stalling and the anti-restrictionists could be told that he was working on a solution. F.D.R. never once pressed Congress for a change in immigration legislation. He never even attempted to go around the legislation on the grounds that the situation
was an emergency. The only instance in which this was done was in the establishment of a refugee shelter at Fort Ontario. Although it was a good idea to have admitted less than one thousand refugees, it was not something that would contribute to the solution of the problem.

The case of the refugee shelter at Fort Ontario was nothing more than a token action. One that would come in handy at some later time when someone asked why the United States didn't do anything to help the refugees. The admission of such a small number of these people would again appease the restrictionists because they knew that the group was a token.

The case of President Truman was quite different from that of Roosevelt. Truman worked to aid the displaced persons greatly. He did not hesitate to call on Congress for a change in immigration policy. Truman made a point of emphasizing the fact that D.P.'s could be admitted with special legislation as an emergency measure. When Congress didn't pass a satisfactory bill, he asked them to revise it.

Truman did have to work against the restrictionists. In the early years of his term there was a strong restrictionist feeling which prevailed. Truman did not worry about compromising his political position because of it. When problems occurred in the D.P. camps he worked to have them corrected.

There are several reasons why American policy was finally revised to allow for immigration of displaced persons. At the end of the war, the facts about how many people were in the concentration camps and what those conditions were like were revealed by the U.S. Army as it liberated them. These facts were released
and efforts were made by certain groups to make the public aware of them.

However, foreign policy considerations had an even more important effect on our D.P. policy.

At the end of the war, a vacuum had occurred. The United States came to the realization that the Soviet Union was the only other major power we would have to contend with. The other nations such as Great Britain and France were weakened by the war and did not pose as any kind of a domiant force in the world political situation, as they had previously.

The United States realized that this was the time to be a leader. Our nation was deeply concerned with keeping as much of Europe as possible democratic. This included the Germany which would result after reconstruction. With many Eastern European nations falling under Soviet domination, the United States had to act to retain the alliance of the western nations and to insure that they were democracies.

By allowing the displaced persons to come into the United States, we would be helping our own cause in Europe.

This would be accomplished in several ways. First of all, we would be showing that the United States was a leader by taking the initiative in the refugee crisis. Secondly, the United States would be aiding Europe, particularly Germany economically. The more D.P.'s that came to the United States, the less Europe would have to contend with itself. This was very important in an already war-shattered economy. Third, the United States could show the world, especially the democratic world, that it had done its part in the refugee crisis. In this way, we would be exonerated from
any guilt of having contributed to the plight of these people.

Finally, along these same lines, was the problem of Germany itself. The refugees in Germany were not being accepted by the German people. Therefore, a large threat resulted to any lasting peace in Germany. Had the Germans decided that they did not want to contend with the displaced persons, other nations could have become belligerent toward Germany for having tried to push the D.P.'s on them. Furthermore, the Germans did not want to absorb the refugees among themselves. Had they been forced to do so, civil disorder may have been the result and any lasting peace internally in Germany could not have been instituted. In this way, the Germans had their cake and ate it also. The United States worked to move many unwanted D.P.'s out of Germany, and then worked to rebuild Germany and its economy.

On a final note, when the war was over, the majority of displaced persons were not Jewish. Most of Europe's Jews had been killed during the war. Prior to the war, the majority of refugees were of the Jewish faith. Letting them into the United States would have aroused much latent anti-semitism. F.D.R. was already defending himself against the cries of a "Jew Deal". Allowing Jewish refugees into the United States would have only turned the volume even louder. When the war was over, Hitler had been successful in killing off over six of the eight million Jews who were in Europe before the outbreak of hostilities. Of the remaining D.P.'s about one-fifth were Jewish. The number of Jews in the overall group was now small enough to make the group as a whole acceptable.
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