

Difficulties for Refugees

Under Present Conditions Immigration Rules Are Held Too Stringent

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

It is interesting to learn from your columns that Archduke Otto of Habsburg has come to the United States again. We remember his widely heralded tour last Winter "to study democratic institutions." His return, however, brings up again that sore point of non-quota visas to enter the United States.

Knowing how many other victims of Nazi aggression have been denied asylum in this country by our quota law, one wonders under what interpretation of the law Otto Habsburg received a visa for six months. American consuls abroad have been instructed to issue no visitors' visas or even students' visas to citizens of States under the Nazi heel, on the ground that they cannot prove that they can freely return to a domicile abroad. Did the Archduke prove to a consul's satisfaction that he can return to his family home in Vienna or to his more recent domicile in Brussels?

Another discrimination in our immigration law comes out in the preparations to bring several thousand British children to this country for the duration of the war. A very worthy project, and the exception which the State Department has made in their favor is generally welcomed.

There are, however, children of German, Austrian, Czecho-Slovak and Polish nationality in England (and probably Dutch, Belgian and French also) who have already been driven from their homes by Nazi aggression. There is no hope of bringing any of them to this country, because the immigration quotas for their countries are full. Would it be too much to ask the State Department to grant them also visitors' visas in order not to deny asylum to children who have already suffered more than the British youngsters we are welcoming? The exceptional regulations just issued ought not to be discriminatory.

A third related question is that of aliens already here on visitors' visas whose homes are now the scene of war. Within the last few days a number of such visitors have received notice from the Immigration Bureau to leave the country by Aug. 31. One wonders where they are expected to go?

An official interview in Washington suggested that the person involved go to Finland, which he stated "is very friendly to refugees." What route one takes to Finland today, I do not know, but people who have little capital or who have been brought here by relatives are unable to travel far and wide in search of a refuge if the United States ejects them.

Congress has already passed a law requiring all such visitors to register and be fingerprinted. Under the supervision of the Department of Justice, there is little possibility of their harming our country, even if any of them had that intention. Many of them are making cultural contributions to our life. It would not hurt us in any way to extend their visas to the end of the war and relieve them from the threat of deportation.

BRACKETT LEWIS,

Secretary, American Friends of Czecho-Slovakia.

New York, July 15, 1940.

Uneasy Dictators

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Your recent editorial "The Sun Also Sinks," with its references to Napoleon and the smaller dictators now with us, suggests one reason why it is not all fun being a dictator. Dictators, because they have newly come to power, all know that they stand on shifting sands.

Details of the mysterious deaths of General Werner von Fritsch in Poland and of Marshal Balbo in Libya will not soon be available, but why von Fritsch was in Poland at all, or Balbo in Libya, is as clear as bright sunshine. They were both highly competent soldiers, also hugely popular men, with the gift of leadership.

One of Napoleon's misfortunes was the fact that, for self-protection, he had to surround himself with mediocrity. Lord Rosebery in his "Napoleon: The Last Phase" gives an authentic incident of how alert Napoleon was to prevent any subordinate usurping power, even insignificant power:

"One day at a levée Napoleon sees St. Cyr, one of his ablest lieutenants. He goes up to him and says, placidly, 'General, you come from Naples?' 'Yes, Sire, after giving up the command to General Pérignon, whom you had sent to replace me.' 'You have no doubt received the permission of the Minister of War?' 'No Sire, but I had nothing more to do at Naples.' 'If, within two hours, you are not on the road to Naples, I will have you shot on the plain of Grenelle before noon,' replied Napoleon in the same tranquil tone."

EDWARD CLARY ROOT,

New York, July 17, 1940.

Tracing the Campaign Button

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

In reference to your editorial "Political Buttons," I desire to record the fact that campaign buttons go back at least to Lincoln's second campaign. At the time I was a very small boy, but for weeks prior to the election had been proudly displaying a Lincoln button and my father allowed me to draw upon his supply to decorate the blouses of neighbors' children.

Perhaps it is not quite correct to speak of them as buttons, as they were square metal frames containing printed portraits of Lincoln—about the size of a postage stamp—and fastened by a pin, as is the present campaign device.

On the morning after Lincoln was shot my mother cut up an old crêpe mourning veil and formed small rosettes to be fastened beneath these pictures on the lapel of the coat.

Among my chums were three small sons of a neighbor who was an ardent sympathizer with the Southern cause, and naturally not very popular in the community. They saw my badge and, boy-like, wanted to be similarly decorated. It was with decided pleasure that my mother fitted them out with the

badges of sorrow, much to the disgust of their father, who did not dare to defy public opinion.

ALFRED COOPER,

Cape May Court House, N. J., July 16, 1940.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

In your editorial "Political Buttons" you ask when such buttons were first used in the United States. I have in my possession a campaign button with the date of 1840 on it—the Taylor and Fillmore campaign.

This button is 2½ inches in diameter, set in a pewter frame covered with glass. It was pinned on with a ribbon at the top. Zachary Taylor is depicted in a blue military uniform.

ELLA DOW WHITE,

Ocean Grove, N. J., July 16, 1940.

Uniform Accounting Urged

Central Federal Authority With Simple System Seen as Need

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Congress has appropriated ten billions of dollars for defense this year. The Defense Council has already awarded contracts for over a billion dollars, and further awards are being made daily.

But, actually, where do we stand as a nation in regard to our finances? How fast are revenues coming in? How fast are expenditures being made? How fast is our debt accumulating? In short, is there anywhere in the government we can turn to find out the complete financial status of our nation?

For practical purposes, the only fairly complete financial statement the public ever gets is from the Budget Bureau once a year, when expenditures for the various agencies of government are assembled as a criterion for granting their budget requests for the ensuing year. The Treasury Department also issues a daily cash statement, but the information contained in it gives no hint of how the various agencies are spending their appropriations.

Financial statements are issued by the several departments and agencies at varying intervals. The quasi-judicial and independent agencies issue their own statements. But there are at least thirty of these independent agencies. Has any one any idea of how much they are spending as a group?

The basic fault, of course, is the fact that no central accounting system exists in the United States. It would take a Philadelphia lawyer to figure out our national financial status. Not that there are no reports. On the contrary, there are tons of financial reports issued. But they are not uniform reports and they present a hopeless problem to even the expert.

Is there some difficult technical reason why the government should not have a central accounting system? There is none. The facts are that under the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 certain mistakes were made, with the result that responsibility for accounting is divided. The Treasury Department, the Budget Bureau, and the General Accounting Office each keep part of the accounts, but no one agency keeps all of them.

The President's Committee on Administrative Management in 1937 pointed out the lack and presented a solution which was never acted upon.

The solution is simple. A Bureau of Accounts exists in the Treasury Department at present, with partial accounting authority. This bureau could easily be given complete authority to control all government accounting.

Under such authority, the Bureau of Accounts could enforce standard accounting classifications so that terms would mean the same thing in all agencies. Next it could require every regular or independent department and agency to submit a summarized control statement every ten days. Agencies such as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which loans money, and the TVA, which earns revenue, would require special treatment.

From these control statements, the Bureau of Accounts could compile a national financial statement on a current, understandable basis. Congress has had the facts for many years. It is its duty to act now.

F. LEE PREG,

New York, July 17, 1940.

Vacation Funds Needed for Blind

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

None need vacations so much as the blind. For them the strain of living is greater than for those of us who can see.

A most important part of our work of keeping the blind happy and healthy is to send them to the country each Summer. We have two vacation homes for adults and a camp for boys and girls. Everything is free, including transportation.

This fresh-air program is supported entirely by voluntary contributions, and the service is rendered regardless of race or creed. This year we desperately need the contributions of all friends of the sightless, so that none who require the life-renewing benefits of the out-of-doors need be turned away. Contributions should be sent to the treasurer, Thomas S. McLane, Fresh Air Fund, 111 East Fifty-ninth Street. ALAN BLACKBURN, Director of Social Welfare, New York Association for the Blind.

New York, July 12, 1940.

Rockefeller Plaza's Roadway

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Closing Rockefeller Plaza to public traffic for a few hours recently in compliance with the lease under which the Center holds the property from Columbia University was intended to preserve the university's property right, but it is not certain that this annual ritual is legally essential. A number of circumstances govern such rights, but tradition requires it, if not the statutes.

However, as to the claim of privacy there can be no doubt, for embedded in the roadway at each street intersection is a row of large metal studs and at the center of each row is countersunk a bronze tablet with raised lettering in capitals: "Property of the Trustees of Columbia University, Crossing by Permission Only, Which Permission Is Revocable at Will." FREDERICK PHILLIPS.

New York, July 15, 1940.

Following Unfortunate Example

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Our country is doing exactly what the other victims of Germany have done.

The population of the conquered countries is one-and-a-half times as great as that of Germany proper. How different the result if the victims had taken forthwith a united stand against the criminal aggressor the moment her purpose was revealed!

THEODORE MARBURG,

Bar Harbor, Me., July 15, 1940.