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June 8, 1939

My dear Mr. Taylor:

I wish to set forth certain considerations and suggestions for your guidance in connection with the forthcoming meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee;

(on Political Refugees)

(1) The refugee problem continues and will undoubtedly continue for a long time to come. It may at any time be greatly aggravated by a new wave of persecution in Germany. In the normal course of events it may be expected gradually to diminish quantitatively in Germany, but to increase quantitatively in Eastern Europe.

(2) This Government's interest in efforts to bring about a solution of the problem is strong. This Government was primarily responsible for the creation of the Intergovernmental Committee. As and when direct action by this Government is required in connection with the refugee problem, this Government has naturally preferred to take such action through the Intergovernmental Committee rather than through any other agency.

International (3) At the same time, the imminent establishment of the Refugee Foundation and the opening up by the Committee of opportunities in various parts of the world for mass settlement have created a new situation, requiring a new integration of private and governmental effort.

(4) The Foundation, which was envisaged in the Rublee plan and is being set up in accordance with that plan, is designed to be in a position to negotiate more effectively with the German authorities concerning financial, and perhaps other, questions than could the Committee. I assume that the Foundation will be ably directed and wholeheartedly supported by the private interests most deeply concerned. Without such support governmental effort can be of little avail.

(5) The financing and administration of settlement projects

Original sent to Mr. Sumner Welles, 6/9/39
for forwarding to Mr. Taylor.
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projects must be undertaken by private corporations specifically organized for the purpose in cooperation with the Foundation.

(6) The terms of reference of the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees permit him to negotiate with governments of countries of immigration for the further development of opportunities for settlement.

(7) It must reluctantly be admitted that this Government's efforts to stimulate concrete action by other governments to meet the problem have been met at best by a lukewarm attitude. In view of the attitude of other governments, and the reluctance which many of them have shown to contribute toward the Committee's expenses during its first year, it is apparent that few governments are willing to contribute on the present basis to the Committee's support for another year.

(8) In the absence of drastic changes in governments and attitudes, if not of human nature, in Europe, the problem in its larger aspects appears almost insoluble except through a basic solution such as the development of a suitable area to which refugees could be admitted in almost unlimited numbers. Whether the Committee could best contribute toward the attaining of such a solution or whether it should be sought through other means is open to question. I am convinced, nevertheless, that every effort must continue to be made to attain a practicable solution along those lines.

In view of the foregoing considerations I envisage that the nature of the Committee in the future should be along the following lines:

Subject to general approval, the Intergovernmental Committee should take steps to turn over its function of negotiating with the governments of countries of settlement to the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. If this is done, this Government is ~~dis-~~posed to contribute to the expenses of the High Commission

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for this purpose. It should turn over its function of negotiating with the authorities of the country of origin to the Foundation. In making this change every effort must be exerted to minimize the risk of unfavorable reaction in Germany.

The Intergovernmental Committee should continue in existence though in an inactive form. It might well be composed of the diplomatic representatives in London of the member governments. If this idea is adopted, the Committee will need at most only a nominal staff and no permanent offices. It should be in a position to meet at short notice if circumstances make its revival necessary. Contributions toward its support should be purely voluntary and in such amounts as the member governments might consider appropriate.

I wish again to emphasize that this Government's interest in practical efforts to solve the problem continues strong and unabated. It will be prepared to exert its influence, through the Committee and through diplomatic channels, to assist the High Commissioner, the Foundation and the settlement corporations in the carrying out of their tasks.

Very sincerely yours,

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The Honorable
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