

Geneva, August 1944.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS
**INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE
TO REFUGEES**

**Report submitted by Sir Herbert Emerson, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., C.B.E.,
High Commissioner for Refugees**

June 26th, 1944.

I. PRELIMINARY

This report is submitted in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations at its nineteenth ordinary session held in September 1938. I regret that there has been delay in preparing it. This is due to the fact that, at the end of March 1944, I had to leave unexpectedly for the United States of America at very short notice and was away for six weeks. Owing to subsequent pressure of work, the report has had to be written piecemeal as opportunity offered.

II. NANSEN REFUGEES

During the period under review, very little fresh information has reached this office regarding the position of Nansen refugees in the various occupied countries.

In France, where approximately 63,000 Armenian and between 75,000 and 90,000 Russian refugees resided in the last five years before the war, only scanty information concerning the Russians is available.

It would appear that, in the period between the fall of France and the beginning of the German-Russian War, the German Occupation Authorities often gave preference to Russian refugees as against French nationals in making appointments to petty offices. After the outbreak of the war against Russia, the position changed. Subsequently, in connection with labour conscription for work in Germany, many Russian refugees were removed from France to that country.

Russian refugees of Jewish origin who were unable to escape into the unoccupied zone and subsequently to Spain suffered the fate of their co-religionists and were either deported east or drafted into labour gangs of the Todt Organisation. The numerous Russian Jewish physicians and lawyers had previously been debarred from the exercise of their professions.

Among the non-Jews, outspoken patriotic and pro-Allied elements were interned in concentration camps, notably at Compiègne, and some leaders were subsequently deported to Germany.

Some of the charitable institutions for the young, the old, and the sick and invalid are reported to have been able to pursue their activities on a smaller scale. They have been financed out of public assistance funds, grants-in-aid from the official « Secours National » and also, to a limited extent, from Nansen stamp proceeds. Switzerland has continued to send assistance, notably for institutions for the care of Russian children.

III. HUMANITARIAN FUND, 1944

The statements attached to this report show the income and expenditure of the Fund for the year 1943.

The balance of the Fund was, on January 1st, 1943 :

- (i) Swiss francs 406,692.05 in the Humanitarian Fund, and
- (ii) Swiss francs 68,665.90 in the Saar Account.

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XII.B. INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

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The balance of the Fund on January 1st, 1944, is :

- (i) Swiss francs 407,165.89 in the Humanitarian Fund, and
- (ii) Swiss francs 68,665.90 in the Saar Account.

In the balance shown under (i), an amount of Swiss francs 274,965.30 is included, which is blocked in a bank in Oslo.

Balances held by the representatives on account of the Humanitarian Fund are the same as last year, owing to the breakdown of communications still existing, viz :

	Swiss francs
France	11,908.60
Greece	1,032.80
Roumania	73.50
Yugoslavia	<u>10,823.50</u>
Total	<u>23,838.40</u>

On January 1st, 1944, there were credits of :

	Swiss francs
Lloyds & National Provincial Foreign Bank, Ltd., London. Gold bar	60,917.30
Lloyds & National Provincial Foreign Bank, Ltd., London. £252 1s. 10d.	4,365.64
Lloyds & National Provincial Foreign Bank, Ltd., Geneva.	1,803.25
Lloyds & National Provincial Foreign Bank, Ltd., Geneva (<i>compte bloqué francs belges</i>)	126.35
Lloyds & National Provincial Foreign Bank, Ltd., Geneva (<i>compte bloqué dollars</i>)	947.50

Bank of London & South America, New York :

Humanitarian Account.	\$9,288.51	40,087.35
Saar Account.	\$15,757.75	67,915.90
Bank of London & South America, Lisbon (held in trust by the American Joint Distribution Committee)		62.00
Den Norske Creditbank, Oslo.	Kr. 274,965.27	274,965.30

Countries in Europe still collecting the Nansen stamp and remitting its product to the Humanitarian Fund are : Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

Grants-in-aid to relief bodies in Switzerland for assistance to destitute Nansen refugees in that country have been maintained on the same level. Assistance to similar refugees in Turkey has been continued through the same channels as before.

IV. REFUGEES FROM GREATER GERMANY

(a) *General.*

It has become increasingly difficult to separate from the general problem of refugees the case of those who come strictly within my mandate as High Commissioner—namely, the Nansen refugees and refugees from Greater Germany. The interests of the latter are inevitably very closely related to those of all refugees, and I make no apology, therefore, for dealing with some of the broad aspects of the question. This is the more necessary because, since my last report¹ was written, there have been developments of great importance as regards both emergency and long-term measures. In the first place, something may be said of the organisations other than the High Commission of the League of Nations which are concerned with the subject.

Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees.—My last report¹ was written when the Conference was being held in Bermuda between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America regarding the refugee problem. One of the recommendations of that Conference was that the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees should be reorganised. It will be remembered that this Committee was set up as a result of a Conference convened on the initiative of President Roosevelt and held at Evian in July 1938. Its object was to deal with the problems created by the involuntary migration of persons from Greater Germany and, in particular, to attempt to evolve, in agreement with the German authorities, an orderly system of migration which would avoid, or at least mitigate, the economic and political

¹ Document C.19.M.19.1943.XII.

difficulties caused to neighbouring and other countries, and which would ensure to those who had to emigrate the resources necessary for their establishment in new homes. The outbreak of war in September 1939 finally destroyed the hope of any such arrangements, and inevitably restricted the practical activities of the Committee, although it continued to do work of value in various directions. In the meantime, the refugee problem assumed very large proportions, and in one way or another involved many millions of persons of diverse nationalities, creeds and classes. In view of these facts, the Intergovernmental Committee was reorganised at the beginning of August 1943, the main features of the reorganisation being the following :

First, the mandate of the Committee was very widely extended " so as to include, as may be found necessary and practicable, in addition to those already within the mandate, those persons wherever they may be who, as a result of events in Europe, have had to leave, or may have to leave, their countries of residence because of the danger to their lives or liberties on account of their race, religion or political beliefs."

Second, the functions of the Committee were much enlarged and now cover such measures as may be necessary to preserve, maintain and transport persons coming within the mandate.

Third, the Committee has undertaken new financial responsibilities. Whereas formerly its liability was practically restricted to the expenses of the Director's office, it now includes the cost of operations which may involve heavy expenditure. The administrative expenses will be shared, in accordance with an agreed scale, by all Government members of the Committee, whilst operational expenses will be underwritten in the first place jointly by the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America, other Governments being invited to contribute on a voluntary basis.

Fourth, the membership of the Committee was enlarged by inviting a number of Governments to join that had not previously been members.

The broad result of these changes is that the mandate and authority of the Intergovernmental Committee cover the whole European refugee field, both present and future. In practice, however, this is subject to certain important qualifications. In the first place, all Governments regard as a primary duty the care of their own nationals who are at present refugees, and some of them have the necessary resources to implement their desires. Second, it is the intention of the Intergovernmental Committee to stimulate voluntary effort rather than to replace it, and the field of voluntary endeavour tends to widen rather than to contract. Third, when the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration operates in a particular area, it will perform certain functions of great importance which would otherwise come within the responsibility of the Intergovernmental Committee. These will be explained later.

In so far as the practical field of the Intergovernmental Committee can be summed up in a few words, it may be said that its services are available where there is no other agency willing and able to carry out work coming within the scope of its functions, that during the war these functions are of a very wide and diverse character and that they are likely to contract in extent but not in difficulty when hostilities cease, until ultimately its main task will be to protect, and in particular to find new homes for, those persons who are in fact if not in name Stateless, because they have no Government of their own both willing and able to protect them.

U.N.R.R.A. — Shortly after the reorganisation of the Intergovernmental Committee in August last, the Conference at Atlantic City defined the functions and scope of activities of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in so far as it was then possible to do so. While the policy may be subject to modification, it seems probable at the time of writing that the responsibilities undertaken by U.N.R.R.A. in regard to displaced persons will include the following : first, when it undertakes relief measures in a particular area, these will cover all persons in need of assistance, whether they are nationals of the country in question, persons who are temporarily displaced from their homes, or those who are unable to return to their own countries ; second, it will generally be responsible for the repatriation of persons to their own countries, but it will not undertake the finding of new homes for those who cannot return, nor will it be responsible beyond a reasonable period for their physical relief. It will work in close co-operation with the Governments of all the countries concerned, who will be profoundly concerned with the welfare, care and repatriation of their own nationals. Thus, as countries in Europe become liberated, either the Governments concerned, or U.N.R.R.A. in co-operation with those Governments, will undertake the solution of the main problems of those who can be repatriated, until the process of repatriation is

complete. There will then remain those who are not able to return to their own countries whose care will be the duty of the Intergovernmental Committee or of the High Commission in so far as they come within their respective mandates.

The War Refugee Board. — Towards the end of January 1944, the President of the United States established by executive order the War Refugee Board, which is composed of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of War. Its function is to carry out the policy of the United States Government in taking all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression who are in imminent danger of death, and otherwise to afford such victims all possible relief and assistance consistent with the successful prosecution of the war. Since its inception, it has been active in examining proposals and devising plans for the rescue of oppressed persons from Europe, and in this task it has the full support of the United States Government. Among other matters, it has given particular attention to the position in the Balkans. Its main purpose is to deal with the emergent problem of rescue, so far as circumstances will allow, and it is not the present intention that it should undertake the work of a long-term character which will arise in connection with refugees after the war.

Co-operation. — It will thus be seen that, at the present time, there are, besides the High Commission, three organisations of a Governmental character concerned with various aspects of the refugee problem. It is essential, therefore, that there should be mutual co-operation and practical co-ordination. All three organisations, either by the terms of their constitution or by specific resolutions, have expressly adopted the principle of co-operation with the High Commission; and, what is more important, active co-operation does exist. On the reorganisation of the Intergovernmental Committee I was confirmed in the office of Director in an honorary capacity. Shortly afterwards my colleague, Dr. G. G. Kullmann, Deputy High Commissioner, was invited to join the Intergovernmental Committee as Honorary Assistant Director. The offices of the two organisations are in the same building, and there is continuous consultation between the two sets of officers. The co-operation between the two bodies is thus as intimate as it can well be.

In one or other of my offices, I have been in constant touch with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and in particular with those sections which are concerned with the problems of displaced persons. This contact is sometimes direct and sometimes through my colleagues Dr. Kullmann and Dr. Patrick Malin, Vice-Director of the Intergovernmental Committee. Before the formal establishment of U.N.R.R.A. in December last, we were in frequent consultation with the American and British organisations engaged on the preliminary work, and since then our contact has become more frequent. During my recent visit to the United States, I attended in my dual capacity a meeting of the Technical Committee of U.N.R.R.A. on displaced persons, and both Dr. Malin and I took the opportunity of discussing matters of common interest with the appropriate authorities in Washington. Dr. Malin and Dr. Kullmann have served on committees convened to examine specific problems and, since the results are available both to the High Commission and to the Intergovernmental Committee, it is of little practical consequence which of the two organisations is represented on a particular occasion.

At the beginning of April this year, I visited the United States, where I was joined by Dr. Malin, to discuss with the War Refugee Board the relations between it and the Intergovernmental Committee. Since this part of my work was concerned almost entirely with my office as Director of the Intergovernmental Committee, it is sufficient to say here that the discussions were very successful. Not only were the respective spheres of the two bodies defined as precisely as the circumstances allow, but cordial personal relations were established with the officers of the Board and measures were devised for active co-operation.

Voluntary Assistance. — Side by side with the increase in Governmental interest and activity, there has been a quickening of voluntary interest. The International Red Cross has continued to help refugees inside and outside the occupied countries in every way permitted by its constitution, and the same policy has been followed by the Red Cross Societies of many countries within their resources and opportunities. Among the private organisations, the Joint Distribution Committee of America has expanded its programme, and no praise is too high for the manner in which it has surmounted many difficulties and coped successfully with new situations as they have arisen. Special mention may also be made of the American Friends' Service and the American Unitarian Service, whose workers have been active in Spain and Portugal, North Africa and the Middle East. In the United Kingdom, the many voluntary committees are primarily concerned with the welfare of refugees who have been given permanent or temporary asylum there, but the interest of some of them extends to the wider problems. On the other hand, the National Committee for Rescue is primarily concerned with the position in Europe, and in particular with its political aspects. It was formed about eighteen months ago and is strongly representative of the various political parties, creeds and voluntary organisations. It has done much to direct the attention of Parliament and of the public to the nature and urgency of the plight of persecuted people in Europe, and especially of the Jews. Again, the past year has shown much progress under

the auspices of U.N.R.R.A. in the training and selection of voluntary workers for service in European countries as they cease to be theatres of war. A number of these workers are now in the Middle East, where they are getting practical experience of camp and other work. Similarly, a start has been made in the selection and training of voluntary workers from America. Although these voluntary workers will be engaged in the general work of relief, this will no doubt include some aspects of service to refugees.

During his visit to Switzerland, Dr. Kullmann was able to renew personal relations with the voluntary organisations established in that country, and so to strengthen the contact which has been kept with many of them through correspondence. He was most favourably impressed by the variety and excellence of the work which they are doing and the manner in which they have responded to the many calls on their services which the position of Switzerland as a country of asylum has entailed. Their work has received the encouragement and assistance of the Swiss Government and the generous support of the Swiss public.

Information regarding voluntary work in other countries is more scanty, but we know that much is being done in Sweden, that before the surrender of the Italian Government private assistance was on a considerable scale, that there are still many persons ready to assist and that in several of the countries occupied by the Axis the sufferings of many thousands have been relieved by the devotion of private workers.

The Position of Refugees. — Before giving a summary of conditions in particular countries, a little may be said about the general position.

In spite of continuous efforts by many different authorities and agencies, little progress has been made in obtaining the consent of the German and other Axis authorities to the departure of refugees from their territories. Some hundreds have been able to leave the Balkans with official approval, and it is hoped that more will be able to do so, but otherwise the various requests, including those made on behalf of children in France, have been met by refusal. Even where there has been a disposition on the part of particular Governments to give the necessary permission, it has often yielded to German pressure, or the Germans have refused to give the necessary facilities. In this respect, the position inside the European countries occupied by Germany and her allies is much the same as it was a year ago, except that it has deteriorated in Hungary and Roumania since their occupation by the Germans. No way has yet been found of getting out refugees in large groups, although during the past few weeks there has been a definite increase in the number of persons who have escaped from the Balkans to Turkey, and have been transported from there to Palestine.

With few exceptions, those refugees who have escaped owe their safety to two main causes. The first is military action, resulting in the liberation of territory or in the new opportunities of escape thereby afforded. Some instances of these will be given in the case of Italy, while the Russian victories have not only rescued millions of Soviet citizens but have saved many thousands of non-Russian refugees. The second means of liberation is through the efforts of the refugees themselves, with such assistance as can reach them. This outside help has increased during the period under review and is growing. The efforts would have been of no avail had not the neutral countries given temporary asylum—*e.g.*, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Further, the plight of the refugees would have remained desperate had it not been for the physical relief available in those countries from Governmental and private sources. In another direction, progress is evident. There has been less difficulty in finding places of temporary or permanent asylum for those refugees who have managed to escape to neutral or Allied territory and, at the present time, there is no large aggregation of refugees in countries from which it is both necessary and practicable to move them. But this is still due rather to the comparatively small number who have been able to escape than to the adequacy of places in which to receive them. This being so, a very warm welcome may be given to the proposal of the United States Government to establish free ports—namely, camps of asylum in which refugees can be accommodated for the period of the war.

Fortunately, in any estimate of the general situation, it is unnecessary to measure the degree of success solely by the number of persons who are able to reach havens of safety, important as this factor is. There is good reason to believe that a large number have been and can be saved while inside the countries from which they cannot escape, and that important results are being achieved, thanks not least to the sympathy and practical help of people among whom they have to live. Thus, while the picture remains one of great tragedy, and although in some ways the horror has grown, the darkness is not entirely unrelieved. There has been progress in various directions and there is good hope of still greater progress.

(b) *Switzerland.*

On the invitation of the Swiss Government, Dr. Kullmann, Deputy High Commissioner, visited Switzerland in January last, and stayed there for about five weeks. He had discussions with the high officials of Government concerned with refugee affairs, visited camps and training-centres, acquainted himself with the various functions undertaken by the International Red Cross and the Mixed Commission and, as already noted, gained a very thorough insight into the services being rendered by the voluntary bodies. In addition, he obtained much information about refugees in neighbouring countries. At the time of his visit, the Federal Government was giving asylum to over 70,000 displaced persons, the majority of whom were prisoners of war, there being about 31,000 civilians. These include persons of many nationalities, with a large proportion of Germans and Austrians, most of whom are Jews. Although the frontiers of Switzerland are closed and immigration is officially suspended, there are so many exceptions to the policy of exclusion that the number receiving asylum has increased very greatly during the year. There was a large influx across the Italian border after the surrender of the Italian Government which was not confined to escaped prisoners of war and Italian soldiers. Moreover, there has been a small but almost continuous flow of refugees across other portions of the frontier, and the Federal Authorities have, in particular, followed a liberal policy towards children and the aged. They have been at great pains, and have incurred considerable expenditure, in organising the reception, maintenance and welfare of civilian refugees. Some of them are lodged in so-called internment camps, or internment residence, but the word internment must be interpreted in a very liberal sense, since ordinarily the camps are not enclosed. There is freedom of movement within a considerable radius, the guards are either non-existent or reduced to a minimum and the management of the camps is left almost entirely to the inmates themselves. Those who are capable of work are allowed to do labour where this is available, and after meeting the costs of maintenance the earnings are credited to their account, a portion being set aside for a yearly holiday. Special arrangements have been made for vocational training and re-training, and there is an excellent scheme of education for the young. In short, the Federal Government has evolved a system of humanitarian, but essentially practical, administration, many features of which are worthy of adoption in other countries during the transition period following the end of hostilities.

Although, owing to the shortage of supplies, there is a ban on the export of food, it has been possible to send drugs, medical requisites and medical foods of various kinds to other countries for the relief of persons in distress.

(c) *Spain.*

Last year I reported that, in the middle of May 1943, there were about 15,000 refugees in Spain, of whom not more than half were Jews and not more than a quarter were Germans or Austrians. Later information showed that, while the total figure was approximately correct, the number of Jews did not exceed 5,000. For some months the influx of persons from France continued but on a progressively declining scale, until during last winter it had fallen to about forty a month only. At present, the tendency is for the number to rise, but it is still on a comparatively low scale. There are several reasons for this. The frontier is more carefully guarded; so far as German and Austrian refugees are concerned, the number in France has been reduced by deportations, and many of those who are left prefer to remain in concealment rather than to take the very grave risks of attempting to escape. When the whole of France was occupied by the Axis in November 1942, many refugees fled south to the Departments under Italian occupation, where they remained in comparative safety until the surrender of Italy. They were then caught by the subsequent occupation by the Germans, except for a few who were able to escape into Switzerland. Simultaneously with the decline in the inflow there has been an increase in the outflow from Spain. The great majority of French nationals have crossed to North Africa; most of the other Allied nationals have gone either to North Africa or to the United Kingdom; nearly 800 Jews have been admitted into Palestine; the Dominion of Canada has, within the past few months, taken about 500; and some individuals have been able to obtain visas for the United States and some of the South-American countries. Thus, at the end of May 1944, there were considerably less than 1,000 refugees in Spain. Meanwhile, with the consent of the French Committee of National Liberation, a refugee camp had been established in North Africa near Casablanca, under the joint administration of the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America, its main purpose being to accommodate those refugees from Spain, and especially the Stateless, for whom asylum could not be found elsewhere. It was found, however, that, with the improvement in the conditions of living in Spain, many preferred to wait there until the end of the war rather than to go to the North-African camp. It was with some difficulty, therefore, that as many as 700 volunteers were selected and, since these are scattered in many places, there has been delay in arranging for their collection and trans-

port. It is hoped, however, that the first party will shortly reach the camp. Meanwhile, the camp is available for the reception of more refugees, should the influx into Spain again approach its early proportions. The Spanish Government has continued its policy of not deporting persons who are able to reach its territory, and has further relaxed the restrictions previously imposed on them after arrival.

(d) *Italy.*

Dr. Malin, my colleague as Vice-Director of the Intergovernmental Committee, paid a visit to Southern Italy in February 1944, where he obtained first-hand information of the refugee problem there, as it then was. At that time there were about 20,000 non-Italian refugees in Southern Italy, of whom about 15,000 were non-Jewish Yugoslavs, the remaining 5,000 comprising nearly one-half Yugoslav Jews and about 1,500 Jews of German and Austrian origin. Poles and Czechs made up the remainder. In addition to these, between 15,000 and 20,000 Dalmatians were transferred from the islands off Split to Italy, from where the majority were moved to camps in the Middle East. The refugees who had been in Italy previous to the Allied occupation had, on the whole, been well treated by the Italian Government and people and there is reason to believe that those still in Northern Italy are receiving help from the Italian population in the towns and villages. During the early part of the Allied occupation of the southern provinces, the refugees suffered, in common with the Italians, from the shortage of supplies, but Dr. Malin found the conditions relatively tolerable, and every effort was being made by the authorities to improve them. The Intergovernmental Committee has now a representative in Southern Italy, attached to the Headquarters of the Allied Commission of Control, who is particularly concerned with the welfare of non-Italian refugees. Associated with him are representatives of the American Friends' Service and of the Joint Distribution Committee, all of whom are thoroughly experienced in refugee and relief work. Since the representative reached Italy only at the beginning of May last, it is too early to form an opinion of the scope of his activities, but he has already given valuable help in getting some 500 Jewish refugees transferred to Palestine. There is as yet no information regarding the number of non-Italian refugees found in Rome and the neighbouring territory occupied by the Allies during the past few weeks.

(e) *Sweden.*

In accordance with her humanitarian traditions, Sweden has opened her country to those refugees who could reach it. She had already given asylum to several thousands of German and Austrian refugees before the war, and this number has now increased to 4,500. She has received many thousands of Finnish children; at the beginning of October 1943, she was giving shelter to nearly 20,000 Norwegians, and at the present time there are 15,000 Danish refugees in the country, of whom nearly 7,000 are of Jewish origin. There is no doubt that many of these Jews would not have reached Sweden in safety had it not been for the vigorous protests of the Swedish Government and the open indignation of the Swedish public when, in the autumn of last year, the German authorities proposed to deport all Jews from Denmark. There is plenty of employment in Sweden for those refugees who are able to work, and the majority of the adults are self-supporting. The remainder, and in particular the children, are well cared for by the Government with the support of the public and of private organisations. The majority of those in Sweden should be able to return to their own countries at the end of the war, so that the long-term problem is not likely to be serious.

(f) *United Kingdom.*

There is little new to report regarding German and Austrian refugees in the United Kingdom. All who are capable of work are in full employment and they have made a notable contribution to the war effort. A survey carried out by the International Branch of the Ministry of Labour showed the extent to which this group of refugees have adapted themselves to war conditions of employment. There have been wide changes of occupation, made possible in many instances by special facilities for training and re-training. The result has been a large transfer from what may be called the black-coated professions to mechanical and manual pursuits and a general broadening of the means of livelihood. This is important, not only in improving the future prospects of those immediately concerned, but as establishing the adaptability of the classes from which they are mainly drawn. It suggests that the concentration within a comparatively few professions, businesses and callings, which is a marked feature of the Jewish community, is due more to environment and lack of opportunity than to other causes. This is encouraging, since the more varied the qualifications of Jewish refugees, the less difficult will be the solution of their particular problems.

The chief anxiety of the German and Austrian refugees in the United Kingdom is their future. Many of them came as trans-migrants and, since naturalisation has been suspended during the war, their status in this respect has remained unchanged. The United Kingdom Government has not been able to make any statement regarding its policy after the war which, as in other countries, is likely to depend to a large extent on economic conditions and, in particular, on the state of employment. Meanwhile, the refugees, with very few exceptions, are establishing the best claim for sympathetic consideration by proving, through their services and conduct, that they are worthy of citizenship.

(g) *Canada and Australia.*

During my visit to Canada, I had the great pleasure of getting to know Senator Cairine Wilson, who has been the representative of the High Commissioner in an honorary capacity for several years. She has taken a leading part in all activities for the welfare of refugees in Canada and, as Chairman of the Canadian National Committee on Refugees, has inspired devoted and excellent work by many voluntary workers. Both at Ottawa and at Montreal, I met many of these and was able to learn from them the position in Canada, while giving them some information about the general situation. It was very gratifying to know that the refugees who had been sent from the United Kingdom in the summer of 1940 and later released from internment in Canada had made good; that military service was now open to them and that the voluntary organisations had remained in touch with most of them. I had discussions with members of the leading Jewish organisations and, in particular, with Mr. Saul Hayes, who is doing most valuable work. Shortly before my visit to Canada, a new group of refugees, about 400 in number, had arrived from Spain. The voluntary organisations which are responsible for their welfare had no difficulty in placing a large number of them in employment within a few days of their arrival. I was told that they had created a very good impression and that it was clear that their stay in Spain in enforced idleness had had little effect on their morale. Since then, a further group from Spain has reached Canada and acknowledgment is due to the Dominion Government for its liberal attitude in giving them asylum during the war. It is also willing to relieve the situation in Tangier, where there is a concentration of refugees and conditions are not favourable. I had the pleasure of discussing with officials of the Dominion Government various refugee questions, and I take this opportunity of thanking them for their sympathy and practical assistance.

Internees who were released in Australia for service in the Labour Corps or for other war work have done very well, and I have seen most favourable reports regarding them. The Commonwealth Government has intimated that it is prepared to consider applications for naturalisation from those who have resided in British territory for four out of the past eight years. Many of the refugees now in Australia are likely to take advantage of this opportunity, but a few may prefer to wait until they are able to emigrate to those countries which they originally had in view. The Commonwealth Government is giving thought to the question of immigration after the war and I have been in touch with it on the subject. Immigration is likely to be on a strictly selective basis and the provisional plans include the adoption of war orphans. It is too early to say how far these plans will assist towards the settlement of refugees. Much will probably depend on the classes and types of settlers available.

V. MISCELLANEOUS WORK

During the period under review, the High Commissioner's Civil Documents Service for refugees under his mandate residing in Great Britain and the Empire has been maintained. The increase in divorce matters reported previously has continued. In spite of difficulties of communication, certified duplicates of divorce decrees from German courts have been obtained. In a large number of cases, however, where a non-Aryan partner has left an Aryan partner behind, the former is unable to contact the latter through the Red Cross Postal Message scheme and ascertain whether a divorce has taken place and, if so, the date of decree and the appellation of the court. In such cases, the Civil Documents Service attempts to secure from the applicant the names and addresses of relatives and friends who might be expected to volunteer the information required. The International Migration Service in Geneva has continued to co-operate in these matters, and results have been achieved, sometimes after prolonged correspondence. In cases where a non-Aryan partner having stayed behind in Germany or Austria has been deported, it is impossible to ascertain his or her whereabouts, or whether he or she is still alive or not. This often creates cases of genuine hardship, as the applicant has to satisfy the British authorities that the partner in Germany has either secured a divorce or is deceased, should he or she wish to re-marry.

Despite the "en masse" denationalisation decree of November 25th, 1941, relating to German Jews having taken up ordinary residence abroad, the High Commissioner's office still receives applications for issue of denationalisation certificates on the basis of individual decrees made prior to the above-mentioned date.

According to existing arrangements, ordinary enquiries as to the whereabouts of refugees in occupied territories are dealt with by the British Red Cross in co-operation with the International Red Cross. In exceptional cases, however, the High Commissioner's office undertakes to make such enquiries through its own channels. They refer mostly to France, and are carried out through neutral collaborators. Sometimes anxious relatives, having failed to obtain any news through ordinary channels, find themselves in the position of people who prefer tragic certainty to the agony of uncertainty. Such persons are grateful if the High Commissioner's office succeeds in tracing the movements of a refugee to an assembly centre at which it can be ascertained that the person has left for an unknown destination at a definite date without leaving an address. Should the person be known to be in good health, such a departure means deportation to a forced labour camp and, although no further communication is possible, there is still the hope that the person may survive. If, on the contrary, the enquiry relates to an elderly person unfit to do manual work, and departure from an assembly point has thus been ascertained, the likelihood of survival is very small indeed, unless the person can later on be traced as being in Theresienstadt. In other cases, persons have changed their domicile and have gone into hiding under assumed names to escape deportation. Voluntary bodies rendering assistance to such persons can often trace their whereabouts and, while not disclosing the address, inform the applicant in the United Kingdom that the person is alive and doing well.

Some time after the landings in North Africa, an Anglo-American Commission was set up for the release of political refugees who had been held under Vichy control in concentration and labour camps. Correspondence ensued between that Commission and this office relating to numerous individual cases of Austrian and German refugees. The Commission welcomed this co-operation, inasmuch as the High Commissioner's office was often able to provide corroborative evidence in respect of the record of some refugees, calculated to hasten favourable decisions. This work came to an end with the completion of the task assigned to the Commission and the release of the bulk of the detainees from camps.

The Deputy High Commissioner has taken much trouble in organising the supply of clothing from the United Kingdom for destitute refugees in Switzerland. The International Red Cross in Geneva offered to assist in the distribution of supplies. The Society of Friends in Great Britain gave some of their stocks, whilst the Association of Jewish Refugees and the Free Austria Movement undertook collections of second-hand clothing. The British Red Cross undertook the packing and shipment of the articles through Red Cross channels, whilst various bodies and individuals underwrote transport costs. The High Commissioner's office secured export licences from the Board of Trade and navicerts from the Ministry of Economic Warfare. As a result of these efforts, over 25 tons of second-hand clothing, cleaned and repaired and in very good condition, were despatched to Switzerland, where the Swiss Red Cross undertakes distribution under conditions laid down in London.

The Deputy High Commissioner has also had long discussions with the British authorities regarding financial assistance to refugees in Switzerland by relatives in England. He was able to clarify some outstanding points during his visit to Switzerland and it is hoped that a satisfactory scheme will shortly come into operation.

The High Commissioner's office is still dealing with enquiries concerning the grant of British entrance permits. On May 19th, 1943, in the course of a debate on the refugee question in Parliament, the British Government announced new categories of persons eligible for the grant of such permits. The enquiries relating to persons coming under these categories referred mostly to Stateless refugees having escaped from Occupied France to Spain. A few cases in Sweden were also dealt with.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT

The attached statement gives a summary of my administrative account for the year 1943. The accounts have been audited up to the end of 1943. My budget allotment for the year was 115,353 Swiss francs, equivalent to £6,648 at the exchange rate of 17.35 Swiss francs to the pound. My expenditure represents a saving of £701 on the budget grant, equivalent to 12,800 Swiss francs approximately. As in previous years, every economy in expenditure has been exercised.

VII. CONCLUSION

I have again to record my indebtedness to my colleague Dr. Kullmann for the great assistance he has given to me. His visit to Switzerland early in 1944 was of the utmost value, since, apart from the contacts he made, he was able to obtain much information not previously available, which prepared the way for new means of assistance to refugees. His

experience and advice have been freely used in regard to many aspects of post-war problems which have engaged much of our time during the period under review. He has served on several committees concerned with such technical subjects as registration, tracing of relatives, etc., and has more than maintained his cordial relations with voluntary organisations.

(Signed) H. W. EMERSON.

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE YEAR 1943

(Administrative Account)

Budget allotment : Swiss francs 115,353, equivalent of £6,648 11s. 9d., at the rate of 17.35.

	Disbursements	Receipts
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<i>Receipts:</i>		
From the Treasury of the League of Nations		6,000 0 0
Balance at end of 1942, transferred to 1943		<u>342 12 7</u>
		6,342 12 7
<i>Disbursements:</i>		
(Appropriate deduction has been made in each item for sundry receipts —e.g., payment by Intergovernmental Committee for accommodation, etc.)		
High Commissioner's salary	2,262 0 0	
Head Office salaries	2,773 10 0	
London Office : rent, heating, cleaning, electricity	542 19 2	
Travelling expenses	102 10 4	
Office expenses (purchase of equipment, insurance, etc.)	152 9 11	
Petty cash	37 0 0	
Telephone, telegrams, postage stamps	75 11 10	
Banking expenses	<u>1 4 0</u>	
	5,947 5 3	
Excess of credits from Treasury over expenditure	<u>395 7 4</u>	
	<u>£6,342 12 7</u>	<u>£6,342 12 7</u>

HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNT, 1943

<i>Receipts.</i>	Swiss francs	<i>Expenditure.</i>	Swiss francs
1. Balance in hand on January 1st, 1943	406,692.05	<i>Grants:</i>	
<i>Less:</i>		For Nansen refugees (other than refugees from the Saar)	7,160.12
Civil documents	125.45	Miscellaneous expenses :	
Miscellaneous	<u>380.85</u>	Bank charges	} 137.01
	506.30	Printing of Nansen stamps	}
	406,185.75		7,297.13
2. Income from Nansen stamps :		Balance in hand on December 31st, 1943	<u>407,165.89</u>
Sold in Geneva	5,600.00		414,463.02
Sold in U.K.	<u>2,079.52</u>	<i>Less:</i>	
	7,679.52	Civil documents	39.05
3. Private contributions :		Deposit for cables	<u>493.65</u>
(a) Refugees from Greater Germany	13.00		532.70
(b) Fees from denationalisation certificates	<u>52.05</u>		
	<u>413,930.32</u>		<u>413,930.32</u>

SAAR ACCOUNT, 1943
(No change from statement for 1942.)

<i>Receipts.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
Swiss francs		Swiss francs	
Balance in hand on January 1st, 1943 :		Grants to Saar organisations in France	—
Bank	67,915.90	Grant made in 1940, but payment not confirmed	750.—*
Representative	750.—	Balance in hand on December 31st, 1943 :	
		Bank	67,915.90
		Representative	750.—
			<u>69,415.90</u>
		Less: Grant made in 1940, but payment not confirmed	750.—
			<u>68,665.90</u>

* Owing to interruption of communications, no notification has been received of payment to beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS FROM SALE OF NANSEN STAMPS, 1943

Date	Country	(Nansen stamps sold in 1943, but paid in 1944) Swiss francs
February 11th, 1943	Ireland	90.20
October 8th, 1943	Sweden	1,980.65
March 10th, 1943	Switzerland	5,600.—
August 19th, 1943	United Kingdom	8.67
	Total	<u>7,679.52</u>

STATEMENT OF GRANTS FOR 1943

Date	Country	Russian Swiss francs	Armenian Swiss francs	Total Swiss francs
April 8th, 1943	Switzerland	1,650.—	500.—	2,150.—
October 12th, 1943	Switzerland	1,650.—	500.—	2,150.—
	Total for Switzerland			4,300.—
July 6th, 1943	Turkey	1,430.05		1,430.05
Nov. 11th, 1943	Turkey	1,430.07		1,430.07
	Total for Turkey			2,860.12
	Total			<u>7,160.12</u>

CHARACTER OF RELIEF

Country	Relief to aged, sick and infirm and miscellaneous grants-in-aid (1) Swiss francs	Vocational Re-training (2) Swiss francs	Youth (3) Swiss francs	Total Swiss francs
Switzerland	3,300.—	—	1,000.—	4,300.—
Turkey	2,860.12	—	—	2,860.12
	<u>6,160.12</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>1,000.—</u>	<u>7,160.12</u>

