Chapter Two

The Refugees’ Ordeal

The challenges associated with introducing nearly 1000 refugees into a community of almost 20,000 people cannot be separated from the history which preceded it. It is difficult to understand the importance of education and training to these refugees without addressing at least some of the context in which those events occurred. There were 982 refugees who made the voyage from Naples in Italy to Oswego, New York. Those refugees represented literally hundreds of stories of horror, betrayal, sacrifice, tenacity, resilience, compassion, and at times simple good fortune amidst tragedy. Though they represent a minuscule portion of all of the suffering produced by the Holocaust and World War II, what they had endured in that world conflict was an integral part of who they were.

These 982 souls had escaped the slaughter, but they brought with them to Oswego the scars, both physical and psychological, produced by all that they had endured. Because of these scars there were circumstances and events at the Shelter which held great significance in the eyes of these refugees. Some challenges were merely cultural. As Europeans the refugees did not understand our American principles of free speech and freedom of the press. They did not totally comprehend the significance of opinions expressed in letters to the editor. Additionally, they did not totally understand when it is and when it is not appropriate to vent ones’ complaints in such a medium. To understand what role schooling played in the lives of the refugees, there must be some effort to
understand the unique context of their personal and collective histories.

Before refugee students entered the Oswego High School, before the refugees had been culled from among the countless victims of those multiple horrors, the plans which placed them there were being formulated. The Roosevelt administration was responding both to the course of the war and the ever-changing character of public opinion. The war was going as well as hoped; however, the true scope of the unprecedented human tragedy was unfolding. Not only were there unintended but unavoidable killing millions of innocent civilians as a product of warfare, there was also the Holocaust.

The Roosevelt administration sought to respond to these events while placating the political forces at home. A solution was devised to offer haven to a small number of European refugees, most of whom would be Jewish. The question faced by government officials was where and how to accomplish this?

As with all political decisions there appeared to be both public and private reasons why Oswego was selected as the site for what would be called the Emergency Refugee Shelter. One week before President Roosevelt announced to Congress his plans to admit one thousand refugees, the Secretary of the Treasury was still looking for a site to house them. In a June 2, 1944 telephone call, Secretary of Treasury Henry Morgenthau discussed with John McCloy, an Assistant Secretary of War, whether the War Department had reached a determination as to which camp would be made available for the shelter. McCloy told Morgenthau “I’ve got a camp— I don’t know which one it is but he– but Marshall said he’d certainly give me one.” ¹ Morgenthau seemed pleased that there was any camp available. McCloy was unsure which camp would best serve the refugees, who
were comprised of both men and women, unlike military units of that era. “I don’t know whether it will be Ontario. It depends upon which one has better facilities for mixed people.” Not only was there to be “mixed people,” McCloy asked Morgenthau if there are going to be children. “I assume there will be women and children.”

Morgenthau was looking for a military camp suitable for the inclusion of both women and children, but there was another criterion. In the press conference announcing the admission of one thousand refugees, the President indicated he was aware that American public opinion, stated that these refugees should not impose on the soldiers in any way. Morgenthau reminded McCloy of that condition. “Mr. Roosevelt revealed that consideration is being given to the possible use of an army camp area no longer needed by the military as a temporary haven in this country for refugees.”

When Secretary Morgenthau called McCloy an hour and one-half later, McCloy had a firm commitment on a site. McCloy added two criteria not previously discussed.

McCloy: Now, it’s either– you can have either Fort Ontario or Madison but we think Ontario is better for your purposes.
Morgenthau: Fort Ontario– where is it?
McCloy: Fort Ontario– it’s near Oswego. We’ve selected one that was somewhere near a town.
Morgenthau: Near Oswego, New York?
McCloy: Yes.
Morgenthau: Well, that’s in the East.
McCloy: That’s in the East. There’s another one out in Fort Thomas, Kentucky, but that’s near Cincinnati, too close to the center of the country, I think. And that is not– I think that is not as good as this one.
Morgenthau: Well, I– this sounds good. Can I tell that to the President?
McCloy: You can tell the President that, yeah.

The camp must be near a town and should be in the eastern part of the country. McCloy stopped himself before stating to Morgenthau why it would be unwise to house the
refugees in the Midwest. Did McCloy believe that there might be a stronger anti-Semitic response in America’s heartland? McCloy may have hesitated expressing such an assessment to the only Jewish member of the President’s cabinet.

Maybe McCloy and Morgenthau were focusing on the east because of the “free port” approach to rescuing refugees. Though ports exist elsewhere, the eastern states were the closest to the homelands of the refugees. In a “Memorandum For The Files” John Pehle, Executive Director of the WRB described a June 1, 1944 meeting he and Morgenthau had with the President. It read: “I then told the President that from the time of the establishment of the War Refugee Board we had been convinced that the most important thing which this country could do to aid in solving this problem was to indicate by our actions that we were really interested in the problem; and that the best way we had found to do so would be by taking some refugees into the United States. I said I realized that to take enormous numbers of refugees who were to live in the United States as residents might not be in accord with general public sentiment, but that since the ‘free port’ proposal had been first broached the support that it had gained had become very widespread. I referred specifically to the ‘private’ Gallup Poll, and the support of labor groups, farm groups, church organizations and newspapers, particularly mentioning the Hearst press and Roy Howard.”

A New York Post article published August 10, 1944 offered this same rationale for Oswego’s selection. The article indicates that the Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter was the first of many “free ports” which were first proposed by one of the newspaper’s regular columnists, Samuel Grafton.

Roosevelt had opposed the term “free port.” This was evident when Pehle
approached him about the Shelter’s name. Pehle described the exchange: “I then mentioned to the President that I understood he did not care for the words ‘free port’ and I handed him a list of names... The President went over the list very carefully and said he preferred the words ‘Emergency Refugee Shelter,’ which he checked. He said that he preferred this because it connoted the temporary character of the refugees’ stay in the United States and also because the word ‘Shelter’ is an honest word and that we won’t be able to provide them much more than shelter.” Though Oswego was a small port by the 1940s, once its primary industry, the city is located on the last land before the border with Canada. The symbolism of where Fort Ontario was located was important. Its position on the shores of Lake Ontario was significant. The refugees were in the country, but held at a point closest to the border. The fact that they landed in New York City and were transported across the state to Oswego did not diminish the symbolism of where they resided.

One reason Oswego was selected was because it had an unused military camp. But why did it have to be a military facility? There were other suitable federal facilities throughout the nation. The Civilian Conservation Corps operated 2110 residential facilities throughout the nation. Seventeen camps in New York State were still operating when Congress terminated the program’s funding in 1942. Why not rehabilitate one of these facilities? In Roosevelt’s cable to Ambassador Winant the President stated why these refugees must be in a secure fort. The cable read: “The President also revealed that while the War Refugee Board is charged with the overall responsibility for this project, the Army shall take the necessary security precaustions [sic] so that these refugees will remain
in the camp and the actual administration of the camp is to be in the hands of the War Relocation Authority.”  

Noting that though the WRB would be charged with the “overall responsibility” but that the WRA, part of the Interior Department, would with the Army’s assistance “take necessary security precautions” meant that these refugees would be housed under conditions similar to those endured by Japanese Americans. They would be provided food and shelter, but like the Japanese Americans these European refugees would not be free to move about. Fort Ontario was selected because it was near a town, in the East, a port near the border and an unused army camp which offered the ability to restrict the movement of its inhabitants. In other words, it had a fence around it.

The official WRA reasoning for selecting Fort Ontario as the Shelter was a public relations gesture intended to flatter the people of Oswego. In his official greeting to the refugees in a formal welcoming ceremony on August 5, 1944, WRA Director Dillon Myer provided a different, more complimentary reason for the choice. Myer described the official reasoning for selecting Oswego. “Oswego was chosen a year ago as a typical American city for the staging of a special United Nations Week celebration.”

Many Oswegonians took this rationale to heart. One letter to the editor published June 11, 1945 in the *Palladium-Times*, pleaded with the community to live up to expectations, which were the reasons for the city’s selection for this experiment in humanitarianism. “A typical American city was selected. A city in which the normal national life was lived. A city in which the good neighbor was the rule. A city that did not have racial or religious animosities. This city was also made the center of the United Nations week observances and a film was made of the city which is being shown throughout the world. These are
great honors. It seems that a group of strangers were selected to assist in this effort and were placed in a position to prove to the world the qualities that this country and city possess.” It might not have been the result of the city’s selection for a United Nation’s celebration. Oswego had a brief history of favorable dealing with people who had been persecuted elsewhere.

From January through September 1941, a contingent of Black soldiers from the 369th Coast Artillery was transferred to Fort Ontario following racial violence at a U.S. Army facility in the South. In a speech before a WRA Convention on September 7, 1944 in Denver, Edward H. Spicer, an official at WRA headquarters, described the fort’s recent history. “The army sent a contingent of Negro troops to Fort Ontario about 1939. That threw the town into consternation. The people were worried and afraid of what was going to happen. They thought that the dignity of Oswego had been lowered. The Negro troops came, got along beautifully with the populace: there were no race troubles. Trade was as good as ever, and so the Oswego people decided all was o.k.”[sic] 10 According to Spicer if the townspeople of Oswego could get along with African-American troops they could get along with a contingent of mostly Jewish refugees.

The Fence

Certain conditions or objects had symbolic meanings for these refugees which greatly transcended what these things were in fact. One such object was the six-foot high, chain-link fence which surrounded Fort Ontario. Though the fence pre-dated the arrival of the refugees by a decade, its presence had a symbolism that far eclipsed the historic reality. The fence around the Shelter was a powerful symbol that impacted negatively on most of
The refugees. These people who had embarked on a journey to become “guests” of the American government found to their dismay that they would be placed in a military encampment which bore a haunting resemblance to Europe’s concentration camps. Most of the refugees had spent some time in concentration camps, a few in Nazi camps while most others were held in the less brutal ones operated by the Italians. Placing them in such a facility which looked so disturbingly similar might have been a necessity, but not preparing them for the eventuality was inexcusable.

The refugees were told repeatedly that the fence pre-dated their arrival. That was correct, but not the whole story, and at best it was a disingenuous response. The fence, topped with barbed wire, was installed years earlier as a routine form of security afforded all military posts. However, they knew that there were also guards at the gates, civilian guards, but guards nevertheless. As described in a Survey Graphic article: “Their only major lack is liberty. Guards stand at the gate of the Fort. The refugees have to have permits to go off the grounds; they are not allowed to go farther from the Fort than nearby Oswego, even to visit relatives who are American citizens.” If the fence had no relevance to the refugees’ presence the gates should have been left unguarded and unlocked.

The skepticism of the refugees was justified. The fence had been installed long ago as they had been told, however, one of the reasons Fort Ontario was selected for the refugee shelter was that it afforded a certain degree of security, that is, limited access as well as limited egress. There were more than two thousand government-owned facilities throughout the country which had no fences surrounding them which could have housed
1000 persons. The fence may have pre-dated the refugees’ arrival, but its presence was evidence of misgivings by federal officials, not the least among them FDR’s Attorney General, about the loyalty of the refugees. One reason the WRA was selected to administer this facility, supposedly under the jurisdiction of the WRB, was because the WRA had previously dealt with large numbers of people whose loyalty to America was in doubt, people whose freedom was restricted.

Another reason for the fence was to placate those who opposed admission of refugees. Those critics of Roosevelt’s policy creating the Shelter envisioned facilities that would be so porous that within short order the residents would have vanished into the general population. In reality, it would have been easy for these refugees to disperse. Unlike Japanese Americans, these refugees were Europeans whose individual physical features were as diverse as that of all Europe’s.

The reality of the fence was that the refugees’ movement was restricted, a fact that could have been accomplished without the fence. The refugee youths who regularly crawled through the holes in the fence could have attested to the obstacle’s symbolic nature. Adult refugees who would have crawled on their bellies for hours to hide from their Nazi and Fascist tormenters, would not demean themselves and bend down to pass through a three-foot hole in a six-foot fence so they could shop in Oswego’s downtown.

For the first thirty days the refugees were not permitted to cross the fence in any manner. Policies drafted August 2nd, the day before the refugees’ arrival, placed strict limitations on the refugees’ movement until September 1st. After that date leave was granted on an as needed basis. The initial plans for security were outlined in a document
entitled *Preliminary Policies*. It read, “Until September 1, 1944, no refugee will be permitted to leave the confines of the Emergency Refugee Shelter except in case of extreme medical emergency for which Shelter care is not feasible.” This was not for national security, or rationales rooted in bigotry, but rather as a reasonable precaution against illness.

Despite the medical quarantine, within short order it was rendered useless by the interaction through and above the fence. One refugee described the contact across the fence during the first days at the Shelter. He recalled: “When we first came, we were a novelty for them, army camps have a mesh fence and on one side stood the people from Oswego. Actually, the houses in Oswego started on the other side of the fence, so the people who lived in those houses would hang around the fence and talk to us, and the people took pictures of it right at the very beginning. The Oswego people, as a whole, were friendly, very positive about our being there.” The activity across the fence was intensive. Errands were run, gifts were passed, even a bicycle was passed over the top. In the August 21, 1944 *Second Week Report*, Smart described the socializing across the fence: “Visiting at the shelter fence has slowed down to some extent although many residents have come long distances to meet relatives at the fence.”

The decades-old fence had large holes in it and Shelter youths quickly found where they were. One former refugee, Ray Boni, recalled: “Initially the Oswegonians were very receptive, they came to the fence, as we call it. There were exchanges, they looked at us, we tried to communicate with them. A few people knew a few words of English. They were friendly, they passed food, they passed clothing, they passed utensils,
whatever. They were very helpful, very friendly. The kids, of course, we were always happy to see other children speaking a different language. We tried to communicate. Eventually we found or made holes through the fence and dug out underneath and found our way to the town. Not so much the town, but the lake at least.”

Another refugee described the porous nature of the Shelter’s fence. He said: “They would have to be in camp, although everyone of us who came here signed a piece of paper saying that we will be in a camp, a shelter, and will go back to Europe after the war, and people were quite unhappy about being fenced in, if you please, although we were not fenced in. We could go into Oswego after a few days in the camp. We could go to Syracuse, which was not far away, as long as you were able to go and come back in the afternoon. You could go, more or less, anyplace you wanted to. Some people went to New York (city) without permission.” In short, for the Shelter’s bolder youths the fence was merely an inconvenience, an obstacle which merely added to the sense of adolescent adventure.

One incident, captured by a photographer from a national magazine, involved a bicycle being passed over the fence. Oswego resident Geraline Rossiter recalled how she contributed to that exchange. Rossiter remembered: “I’d go up to the fence and these children, all of a sudden, they’d say ‘bee-seek-la, bee-seek-la.’ And I thought, ‘Oh my gosh how could I let them take this bike?’ ...I was going to let them take it about four hours, cause I figured that’s how long I’d be in there. Every day that I could I let them take the bike.”

Despite the interaction, which literally transcended the fence, once the novelty of the refugees’ presence had dissipated and the Shelter’s residents were given limited access to the community, the fence loomed as a daily reminder as to the freedoms
these people were denied.

Walter Greenberg, who had been a teenager during the eighteen months the Shelter was opened, reflected: “For me Oswego, Fort Ontario, was a bittersweet experience. It was sweet because I had food, I had shelter, I had doctors, I went to school, finally. My teachers were wonderful... I had everything, but I still didn’t have my freedom. I was still behind the fence.” 18 The freedom to learn was in direct contrast to the restrictions the fence represented. Not only were the students allowed to leave for schooling, their time spent in school did not count against their allotment of time in town. The freedom to attend schools for the children was an unintended counterbalance for this perceived insult of the fence. The freedom of the children made the federal officials’ response that the fence was not there for them more believable.

The dichotomy of confined Shelter’s adults watching the children leave for school each morning posed yet another challenge for Smart. Survey Graphic wrote about the Shelter describing the balancing act Smart had to maintain. It read: “Mr. Smart’s job was almost an impossible one. He tried to give a sense of freedom to these men and women who are confined to the haven they have found in the new world. He tried to make their camp a united, democratically operated community, the members of which have every freedom by movement.” 19 The author did not recognize that it was the schooling which produced the “sense of freedom” missing from the camp. She was also not aware that democratic practices were extremely limited, that is, internal governance and First Amendment rights were also lacking. Shelter residents who wrote letters-to-the-editor were chastised by the camp administration just as the democratically-elected leadership
resigned en masse when they realized they had no real authority to deal with anything more than work assignments.

The anger directed at the fence and the confinement it effectuated was not just because the Shelter’s antiquated brick buildings and wooden barracks looked like a concentration camp. The shock of its appearance would have ameliorated after a few days when the refugees recognized the welcoming attitudes of the WRA officials and the polite demeanor of the Shelter’s guards bore no resemblance to their European experience. The Shelter’s staff was even a dramatic improvement over the harried and war-weary Allied forces who had replaced the Italians when the concentration camps were liberated and converted, literally overnight, into camps for displaced persons. The fence simply added insult to injury.

One source of the conflict was the product of a misconception about the refugees caused by Roosevelt’s rhetoric. An imprecise interpretation of the motivation for bringing these refugees to America was that they had to be rescued from annihilation. The reality was that most of the refugees who came to Fort Ontario had either escaped to the liberated sections of southern Italy or had been already been in hiding within an Italian region when it was liberated by Allied forces. With the exception of those refugees who were incarcerated in Italian concentration camps, most of the Shelter’s residents had escaped the Nazis or the Fascists through their own efforts or those combined with Italian citizens and officials. In a July 30, 1944 report entitled Preliminary Report by B.R. Stauber, a WRA official, who with Gruber had accompanied the refugees on the voyage, he wrote: “About three-quarters of the group was selected from camps and former
“libero-confines” in southern Italy as far north as Naples. This included persons from in and around the Transit Camp at Bari, the Ferramonti and the St. Maria di Bagni Camps, the Monastery at Compagna, and groups living in and around Taranto, in Potenza Province, and in and around Salerno and Naples.”

The report continued: “The remaining quarter of the refugees were persons living in and around Rome. Prior to the expulsion of the Germans from Rome, most of these were living in hiding, but with withdrawal of the Germans they lived as free men, receiving support partly from their own efforts and partly from various officials and semi-official sources.”

The belief that these refugees had been saved by their emigration to America was based on a misinterpretation of the policies which led to the Shelter’s creation. The Roosevelt administration believed that the Allied forces were discouraging refugee flight because of its impact on troop movements. Additionally, Allied military officials believed that allowing the liberated sections of southern Italy to be overwhelmed by refugees fleeing the Nazi slaughter would complicate the logistical component of the war effort. On May 18, 1944 Pehle wrote Roosevelt and described these developments. He wrote: “As a result of the limited facilities in that part of Italy under Allied control, the military forces have not been able, generally speaking, to encourage the escape of refugees to Italy from enemy territory, and for this reason, the escape of the largest possible number of refugees has been prevented. Moreover, the problem of the care of the fairly substantial number of refugees who have arrived in Italy by their own efforts, has constituted a considerable burden to the military authorities. Quite recently the facilities for the care of refugees in southern Italy have become so overtaxed that the military authorities have
taken steps actually to discourage [author’s underline] the escape of further refugees to that area from German occupied territories until many of the refugees now in Italy can be moved to havens of refuge elsewhere.”

Pehle continued, “This situation not only prevents the rescue of people in Yugoslavia who are being indiscriminately slaughtered by the Germans, but also interferes with efforts to rescue Jews, from their desperate plight in Hungary, through Yugoslavia.”

The essence of the misunderstanding was that the emigration of one thousand refugees, the original number proposed, would save lives of those fleeing oppression. But it would not specifically be the lives of the 982 who traveled to Oswego that would be saved, but rather the untold thousands who were not fleeing Nazi controlled regions because they believed they would not be permitted to cross Allied lines to safety. The departure of the refugees bound for Oswego provided more room in southern Italy for those whose lives were placed in imminent danger by the barbarous actions the Nazis took in the final months of the war.

The belief that refugees were rescued from imminent death impacted on virtually all aspects of the public’s perceptions regarding their behavior. When the refugees complained about their lack of freedom or conditions at the Shelter, it was viewed by those who believed they had been rescued from death as an indication that they were ungrateful. In contrast, many of the refugees wondered why they gave up the relative freedom and warm climate of southern Italy to reside behind a fence in a city known for its cold and snow. This fundamental misunderstanding was the essence of much of the conflict which surrounded the Shelter.
Guests of the American Government

A second source of anger for the refugees emerged from what appeared on the surface to be a relatively minor point. When the refugees were recruited for emigration from Italy they were all told, in various translations, that they would be “guests” of the American government. One of the earliest reports sent to Washington described the problem caused by semantics. The report written by Smart read, “Unfortunately the statement used the phrase ‘where I shall remain as a guest of the United States...’ and this is already being used as the peg on which to hang complaints concerning treatment.”  

This term had actually been first used in the Japanese-American Relocation Centers to describe the extra-legal, and what history would deem unconstitutional, status of the relocation camp internees. At a WRA conference in 1942, Smart addressed the WRA teachers. He said, ‘These folk who are temporarily our guests will go from these centers at the proper time...”  

The word might have been initially employed as a politically motivated euphemism, however ironic that was for Japanese Americans, it was fraught with unintended cultural implications when used with Oswego’s polyglot refugees. Americans viewed the word’s meaning one way while Europeans another. In America “guest” implied a visitor who was welcome to stay. But in America the long-term responsibilities of a guest included helping your host. Whereas in Europe there was a regal connotation. As expressed in the Spanish maxim, “My house is your house,” in Europe there was an unstated sense of total accommodation. In short, “guest” meant something quite different to the refugees than was intended by the American officials. This was all complicated by the British official, who was alleged to have misrepresented
conditions and made unauthorized promises to prospective refugees to secure their agreement to emigrate.

The conflict regarding freedom of movement and the meaning of the term “guest” began almost immediately. Just days into the voyage from Italy, the refugees complained about their treatment. They were unhappy with their quarters on this troop transport and hospital ship, the *Henry Gibbons*. One of Smart’s first reports described the problems. Smart wrote: “The reaction of the refugees to the accommodations [on the *Henry Gibbons*] was immediate and unfavorable, not on the basis of the mixed sexes but on the basis that the quarters did not benefit what they had expected, and they resented the necessity of conforming to certain requirements of ship regulations.” 26 As would be the case at the Shelter, the refugees complained about why they had to do the menial work of ship maintenance as guests, and more importantly, they began to question what degree of freedom they would have while residing at Fort Ontario. Time and again there was evidence that these well-intended Americans who had sought to help these refugees did not understand them. The measures each refugee took to survive, in other words, the humiliations, the drastic steps, the extraordinary hardships endured, did not mean that they would demean themselves and work like steerage passengers earning their fares through labor. They were invited to come to America; they weren’t abducted as a form of impressment.

Though it was clear that the term “guest” was becoming a source of conflict, Smart still used the term in the Shelter’s invitations. The invitation read: “The war refugees who are to be guests of the United States Government for the duration of the war
will arrive this week end. The Emergency Refugee Shelter is holding a welcoming program here at the Fort, and a selected group of city officials, representatives of leading civic organizations, etc, are participating in the reception.” 27 Smart used the term again in his welcoming speech before the community leaders and the assembled refugees. Smart said: “We are gathered here today to welcome a group of visitors from many foreign lands who are to be the guests of the government of the United States until they can return to their homes at the termination of the war. On behalf of the resident staff of the War Relocation Authority, I desire to say that we look forward with pleasure to living among you and to doing what we can to make your stay comfortable and happy.” 28 Smart might have used the word deliberately to force the standard which was implied by “guest” at a time where it would have best served the federal government’s political interests to have downplayed or even ignored the word which had become the basis for dissent and conflict.

An indication that Smart may have been using “guest” knowingly was how he described the refugees’ freedom while they resided at the Shelter. At a time when the WRA was acquiescing to pressures from the Attorney General and critics outside the administration, Smart was alluding to a much more lenient policy. The broad implication of “freedom” implied that Smart had intended to push the envelope wherever he could. Smart had the latitude to emphasize the probable short duration of the refugees’ lack of freedom, instead of the commitment he made that they would be as free as permitted by “physical facilities.” Smart’s speech continued: “I assure you that while you are at Fort Ontario there will be a minimum of supervision and that you will be able to live your own lives with a great freedom as the physical facilities permit. Your privacy will be respected.
Whenever there is a knock on your door, it will be a friendly one.” 29 The WRA and Smart were often at odds with those officials who formulated policies which were guiding the administration of the Relocation Centers.

Differences regarding what it meant to be a guest were never resolved. Even more than fifty-five years later, former refugees reflected in amazement what it meant to be a “guest of the government.” Despite the conflict produced by what only could be called bureaucratic jargon, Smart made every effort to bridge the gap in both semantics and the realities the words attempted to describe.

Endnotes


2 H. Morgenthau 1944.

3 H. Morgenthau 1944.

4 H. Morgenthau 1944.


6 John Pehle, June 1, 1944, attachment to a letter sent to Myer, letter attached was sent to Leonard E. Ackerman, Special Representative, War Refugee Board, June 14, 1944, Transfer from Italy to FOERC File, Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York.

7 Pehle June 1, 1944

8 Franklin D. Roosevelt, June 8, 1944, cable to Ambassador Winant, London, Morgenthau Collection, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.

9 Dillon S. Myer and Joseph H. Smart, August 6, 1944, Statements of Greeting to
Refugees at Fort Ontario, Early Documents File, Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York.


13 Refugee Who Spoke Eight Languages, 1984, transcript of interview by Lawrence Baron, File 31, Safe Haven Collection, Special Collections, Penfield Library, State University of New York at Oswego.


15 Ray Boni, 1996, videotaped interview by Frank Bevacqua, Frank Bevacqua Interviews, Safe Haven Collection, Special Collections, Penfield Library, State University of New York at Oswego.


17 Geraldine Rossiter, 1996, Videotaped interview by Frank Bavacqua, Frank Bevacqua Interviews, Safe Haven Collection, Special Collections, Penfield Library, State University of New York at Oswego.

18 Walter Greenberg, 1984, transcript of interview by Lawrence Baron, File 37, Safe Haven Collection, Special Collections, Penfield Library, State University of New York at Oswego.

19 Karpf 1945.

21 Stauber August 3, 1944.

22 John Pehle, May 18, 1944, memorandum to The President with attachments, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.

23 Pehle May 18, 1944

24 Stauber August 3, 1944, 7.


26 Stauber August 3, 1944, 7.

27 Joseph H. Smart, August 3, 1944, invitation to townspeople to attend official opening of Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter, Early Documents File, Fort Ontario Emergency Refugee Shelter Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York.

28 Myer and Smart August 6, 1944, 2.

29 Myer and Smart August 6, 1944, 4.