

Bennington College  
July 25, 1940

Memorandum of Information

Re: The Organization of the Care of European Children

There are two systems--one organized and one private, for bringing children from England to the United States to escape bombs and life in the war zone. The first is the plan called specific cases. This involves no organization and is a private arrangement between a parent or family in England and a parent or family in the United States known to the English parent. Many of these are cases of relatives. In these cases the American family which agrees to take known English children makes a personal statement of responsibility with a bank endorsement of the responsibility and sends it to England by cable or letter. The English parent then uses this evidence along with the other usual evidence to obtain a passport and visa for the child. The English parent must also make some provision for care and pay for the transportation to this country. Upon arrival the individual American parent is, of course, immediately responsible. The United States government now issues visas for accepting children from England for the duration of the war. They come in on visitors quotas. Such children are now coming in at the risk of the English parents. and

The second method involves group organization and represents the case of an English family sending children to be cared for in the United States without knowing who will take care of the child and with responsibility being placed largely on the organizations arranging for such care. So also the American family agreeing to receive such a child does so on the guarantee of committees organizing the transfer of children.

The set-up is as follows: There is an English committee recognized by the government under which all children are registered by the English parents. No child is accepted who is not in sound health and of normal mental quality. The English committee has as its sole representative in the United States its American equivalent, the U. S. Committee for the Care of European Children. Very rapidly all organizations in the United States--schools, colleges, and others--are affiliating themselves under this national committee. The English committee is registering the children in England and arranging for their transportation. Since they are now coming on a visitors visa for the duration of the war, it is understood also that they will arrange for the return of orphaned children at the end of the war. The American committee accepts corporate responsibility for the children and will distribute them to people and places registered and approved by it.

This means that a Bennington County Committee would send in its certified and approved homes for a certain number of children and the national committee would assign children in that amount to the local group upon arrival. The local group would, as favorably located as Bennington is, meet the children through a representative and take care of them temporarily while they are being assigned to the individual

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homes. The American committee by agreement with the U. S. Children's Bureau must have the approval of an approved child welfare agency, of each home as a proper one for the reception of children. Also this same welfare agency will have the task of supervising the children in these homes to see that they are receiving proper care.

The task of each local organization approved by the United States Committee will be to organize locally the certification of homes, the collection of funds or pledges to maintain children in the homes of others, obtaining the approval of the child placement agency for each home offered, organizing the reception in America and temporary care of the children in an institution, arranging if possible for guaranteeing medical aid and free schooling for the children in the locality.

RDL

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