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MEXICO - IMMIGRATION AND REFUGE

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PREFACE

Immigration and Rescue during the Nazi era is a topic which has been dealt with in a large number of research projects and books. Some of these touch upon events and facts related to Latin America. So far none has been dedicated to Latin America as a whole and only very few analyze in some way one or more of the Latin countries. It is the intention of this project therefore to bridge this gap.

Immigration is a drama in which the receiving society and the immigrants play the central roles, but it is very rarely a show for two actors. During the Nazi era, when forced emigration was more common, this drama involved even more elements than was usual. This project will also contemplate the contribution from the other forces at play in the final balance of actions and blunders.

Save for a brief introduction that sketches a background for the project as a whole, this paper centers on the case of a single country: Mexico. The description and analysis of the Mexican story will exemplify the approach to be taken in the eventual book for purposes of preliminary discussion.

Most of the material used in this research was collected in Mexico, Great Britain, Spain, Austria, and of course Israel during recent years, with the assistance of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture of New York.

ABBREVIATIONS OF ARCHIVE MATERIALS

AGN	Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico, Mexico City
Gob.	Gobernación (Units of Ministry of the Interior)
PLC	Presidencia Lázaro Cárdenas (Presidential files)
PMAC	Presidencia Manuel Avila Camacho
AHRE	Archivo Histórico (de la Secretaría) Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico (Foreign Ministry Archives)
AJA	American Jewish Archives, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati
AJC	American Jewish Committee Archives, New York
BPRO	(British) Public Record Office, Kew Gardens, London
JCA/LON	Archive of the Jewish Colonization Association, London
JDC	Archives of the American Joint Distribution Committee, New York
YNY HH	Yivo Archive, New York. RG 245.4 HIAS and HICEM Central Office, Section XIII: Latin America

INTRODUCTION

In discussions of immigration during the decade preceding the rise Nazism to power, Latin America was the most prominent bloc of nations. While the United States had at that time dramatically reduced the volume of acceptable immigration, large contingents of immigrants continued to arrive annually in several of the Latin American countries. After the Nazi era began in January 1933, new destinations for emigration were continuously tapped and the reception of immigrants acquired an increasing dimension. In the short term this meant the opening up of havens of refuge; it turned out in the long term to spell rescue.

After analyzing the proceedings of the International Conferences of American States held during the years 1933 to 1945, one must conclude that Latin America was not speaking with one voice. The laws and regulations adopted within each country, and even more so their actual execution, were influenced by a variety of internal and external factors, the example and leadership of the other nations of the continent being only one of them. Latin America's role in immigration and rescue during the Nazi era should thus be studied in the context of each nation and should reckon with the various factors which influenced the final balance of forces.

The first indispensable element in our analysis must be the previous experience which each nation had with immigration. Immigration from Europe was a dominant factor in the demographic build-up of Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, and the southern half of Brazil during the latter decades of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. These "Cono Sur"

countries could thus be also called Euro-American countries. The make-up of the Andean countries of South America and most of the nations of Middle America, with large populations of "mestizo" and Indian stock, was only slightly affected by later arrivals. Mexico, as one of them, should thus be considered a case of what we could call the Indo-American nations. Immigration policies of each nation, both before and during the Nazi era, were of course influenced by the internal political and economic structures of interests and ideologies. These ought to be identified in order to evaluate the relative strength of those who favored and those who opposed immigration. Prejudices regarding certain kinds of immigrants might have been shared by both supporters and opponents and thus affected the prospects for some immigrants more than for others. While reasons for these prejudices might have been completely domestic, they may also reveal the impact of external factors.

The influence of the great powers of Latin America is well-known. During the Nazi era the primacy of this influence rested with the United States. This implied an important role when governments were called upon to make decisions regarding the admittance of immigrants. What was this role? The restrictive domestic immigration policy pursued by the United States was at that time well-known. Nevertheless, the image which the Roosevelt administration deliberately assumed was one leadership in the concern for the oppressed. We should therefore not fail to consider its impact on the Latin American governments.

Great Britain's influence in Latin America, though by then diminished, was still a force with which to reckon. The bête noire of British policy in the Nazi era was the problem of Jewish immigration to

Palestine, which characterized many decisions. Since an alternative to the return of the Jews to their "homeland" was desired, might this not have eventually influenced proposals for migration to Latin America?

Germany's contribution to immigration in Latin America was more complex. Not only were German policies the principal cause of emigration but, through its large communities of ex-immigrants, whom Nazi ideology regarded as Volksdeutsche, Germany was heavily represented on the immigrant side of the story as well. From its start and until the fall of 1941, the Nazi regime's policy was to expel the Jews. Consequently, the opening up of new havens might have been in line with German interests. At the same time Anti-Semitism, as a basic element of Nazi ideology, surely fostered local opposition to Jewish immigration in German communities overseas. Germany's concern for the German people might have provided Latin American governments with important means for rescue during the latter years of the war. How did the German influence bear on immigration issues with Latin American governments, and how did these governments exercise their influence in issues of rescue?

Another external force in Latin American immigration policies were the international organizations founded for the care of refugees. The first such agency was the High Commission for Refugees (Jewish and Other) coming from Germany, which was established in October 1933 as an independent agency of the League of Nations. Some Latin American countries were invited to join its board, and Latin America was soon called upon to contribute to the search for a solution to the refugee problem. Five years later, at the Intergovernmental Conference held at Evian, the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees was created, with several Latin American countries serving on

its Executive Board. Latin America was thereby given the dual role of soliciting help for the refugees as well as making its own contribution. How did the nations respond?

A further impact on the balance of immigration came from private welfare organizations. Both the High Commissioner's Office and the Inter-Governmental Committee relied on funds from these organizations in their efforts to convince governments of the viability of the immigration projects proposed to them. These groups proved even more essential in the practical work carried out in each country on behalf of immigrants who did arrive. This latter function could hardly have been fulfilled however, without the contribution of another element: the local communities of former immigrants. Their knowledge of the local environment and practices, coupled with the personal contacts they would make, proved indispensable to practical efforts to widen the immigration possibilities and to help accommodate those who managed to arrive.

A wide gamut of factors, ranging from the world powers and international organizations to the local minority societies, will have to be analyzed in order to assess the contribution of Latin American nations to immigration and rescue during the Nazi era. Although the natural focus of our interest will be the immediate victims of Nazism, their case cannot be properly understood without reference to two important considerations: the general immigration policies of the receiving countries, and the experiences of other immigrant groups arriving in the respective countries both before and during the twelve years of Nazi rule in Germany.

In this paper we will consider the case of Mexico, which achieved a remarkable social and ethnic revolution not long before the beginning of the

Nazi era. The singularity of Mexico with respect to geographic location and its twentieth-century history must here suffice to exemplify the multi-faceted approach that we plan to apply to Latin America as a whole.

MEXICO- IMMIGRATION AND REFUGE

A. FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE NAZI ERA

When the Nazi Party came to power in Germany on January 30, 1933, Mexico had already adopted a very strict and xenophobic immigration policy, apparently in tune with the nativist and "leftist" character of its revolution.

One of the main features of the regime of Porfirio Díaz, against whom the revolutionaries rebelled, was the enormous preference given to foreigners both as investors and as settlers. The belief in the natural inferiority of the local "mestizo" stock and the absolute superiority of the Europeans and North Americans was a powerful element in the "open door" policy pursued by the "científico" ministers and by their master and President.[1]

Despite all their endeavors the positivist rulers of Mexico did not succeed (as did some of their counterparts in other Latin American countries) in changing the ethnic composition of their population. The number of available immigrants and the size of the native population limited the possible impact of such a policy in Mexico. Between 1909 and 1910, the last two years of the Díaz regime, and also the first time immigration statistics were collected, only 92,061 aliens were reported to have entered. Many of the newcomers, as well as other foreigners who had arrived earlier, might have left during those same years, thus reducing their small numerical input in the immigrant presence in the mainly "mestizo" nation of 14,500,000 Mexicans. The foreign-born inhabitants of Mexico in 1910 were only 0.77

percent of the total population.

During the same years Argentina received a net new population of 332,540 immigrants who joined a nation of some 6,500,000, roughly half of whom were themselves of immigrant descent.[2] The large waves of world migration which reached one of their peaks during these years had thus by-passed Mexico. Nevertheless, immigration during the pre-revolutionary era introduced at least one ethnic element which attracted particular animosity and resentment.

The Chinese

Although he favored Europeans, Porfirio Díaz was not averse to non-European immigrants. After 1893, when the Treaty of Trade and Cooperation with China was concluded, several thousand cheap laborers were contracted and brought over from China. Many more followed them, settling mainly in the towns of the northern and western states of Mexico.[3] According to the 1910 census, there were 13,118 Chinese living in Mexico,[4] and a tremendous influx of them continued thereafter.[5]

The arrival of Chinese during these years is even more remarkable since it was precisely during revolutionary fighting that Orientals became a target of the long-standing xenophobia of the Mexicans. In May 1911 revolutionary soldiers siding with Madero attacked the town of Torreón, Coahuila, and massacred 303 Chinese and five Japanese residents. The Chinese were persecuted, looted, and legally discriminated against in most northern states on various occasions throughout that period. As the fighting swept through the towns, crowds of Mexicans tried to oust them from their midst. Animosity was not subsequently eroded, but tended to be

institutionalized. During the initial years of the revolutionary regime, Chinese immigration decreased sharply to only 4 percent of the 56,109 immigrants who entered and remained in Mexico from 1919 to 1924, according to official statistics.[6] Nevertheless, the myth about their constant multiplication persisted among their enemies who formed the National Pro-Race League (Liga Nacional Pro Raza) under the slogan "For the Nation and for the Race" (Por la Patria' y por la Raza), and established "Anti-Chinese Sub-committees" (Sub-Comités Antichinos). They petitioned the Government to:

a) Prohibit Chinese immigration into their country;

b) Expel Chinese who lived illegally in their territory;

c) Prohibit marriage between Mexican women and Chinese; and

d) Establish isolated colonies for Chinese.[7]

The reasons advanced for the anti-Chinese campaign were first and foremost economic: their dominance in various branches of commercial and personal-services occupations (groceries, restaurants, laundries, and clothing business) and their strong influence in the small towns. Other expressions of anti-Chinese sentiments were typified in three leaflets circulated in the state of Chihuahua in July 1926, with slogans such as:

"The Chinese danger - Trachoma, the terrible Chinese disease is the cause of blindness."

"This anti-social race sells bogus goods... They are exposed to contagious diseases and leave germs on goods they sell."

"Banish Chinese... and women living with them." [8]

The Chinese legation in Mexico sought the intervention of the Foreign Minister to have the situation addressed.

Such organized activities must have had some support from local authorities. Indeed, what the Anti-Chinese Sub-Committees were asking

President Plutarco Elías Calles to institute nationally he had already started in the state of Sonora while he was governor there, and was continued by his successors. In 1923 the local legislature passed two laws -one reaffirming a previous act regarding the segregation of the Chinese, and the other prohibiting marriage or concubinage between Chinese and Mexicans.[9] Racial discrimination was therefore not just a xenophobic attitude, but also had legal backing.

While this racist and nationalistic campaign was developing, another heterodox immigrant group was about to make its entrance into Mexico.

The Jews

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Jews had already been moving to Mexico in small groups as well as individually. It was not until the latter years of Porfirio Díaz, however, that they established their first community in Mexico City, which they called Monte-Sinaí. When the United States began to restrict immigration after the war, East European Jews started to arrive in Mexico hoping to cross over into the United States both legally and illegally.

The small Jewish community in El Paso, Texas was so concerned at the appearance of Jewish "wetbacks" there, that Martin Zielonka, the local rabbi, requested the B'nai Brith Order to find ways of preventing this illegal movement by helping the immigrants to settle in Mexico. He got support from the Industrial Removal Office (IRO), a New York-based organization charged by the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) of Paris with helping to find new havens for Jewish emigrants. Also involved was the Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) which had been pleading with the Department

of Labor on behalf of 122 illegal Jewish immigrants from Mexico who had been ordered deported to Poland.

A study of the situation of Jewish immigrants in Mexico was done by two separate commissions, in June and July 1921.[10] It was estimated that between 3500 and 5000 Jews coming from several countries were living there. Most of them concealed their Jewish identity. In 1921 a total of only 400 newcomers was recorded, all of whom were young singles on their way to relatives in the United States. In the meantime, many of them, began peddling stockings, neckties, drinks, and fruits in the streets of Mexico City, where they were mainly concentrated. The commissions managed to establish a local immigration aid society, but concluded that Mexico was unsuitable for further large-scale immigration. The HIAS Commission stated that they could not " ...under present conditions, reasonably recommend anyone to go to Mexico".

The IRO and B'nai Brith delegation, however, saw opportunity for as many as 10,000 Jewish immigrants, "but only as small independent contractors or merchants who had to have sufficient finances". As a result of these reports, neither the HIAS, JCA, nor IRO encouraged Jewish migration to Mexico. Despite the further tightening of United States immigration regulations, however, more Jewish immigrants drifted into Mexico. A dramatic situation developed during the summer of 1924, when the United States introduced a new immigration quota system which left thousands of prospective immigrants stranded at ports of embarkation in Europe, or on their way thereto. In response to their plight, forty-three Jewish organizations in the United States decided to combine their efforts in an Emergency Committee on Jewish Refugees.

In this connection Calles, the President-elect of Mexico, issued a surprising statement to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that "The policy of my government will be to welcome all Jews who wish to settle in Mexico". This he later confirmed in a written and signed declaration which identified agriculture as "the first line of action", but which also mentioned import-substitution industry, and was widely publicized in the Jewish press. Migration to Mexico was thus brought to the attention of many prospective émigrés.[11]

An exploratory mission of the Emergency Committee toured Mexico extensively meeting with, among others, the Secretary of Industry and Labor Luis Morones, who was also organizer for the Confederation of Labor and one of President Calles' chief aides. The mission indicated that "...the immigration, at least initially, would be largely urban", and also discussed "the religious and race aspects of Jewish settlement". The mission reported that the Mexican government was very favorable to Jewish immigrants, who would be exempt from the anti-clerical policies and the requirement that foreign industrial enterprises employ at least 80 percent Mexican labor.

In reporting back to the Emergency Committee, two divergent views were presented: one against further migration to Mexico, and the other in favor of encouraging a rate of 300 immigrants per month over three years, subject to periodic review.[12]

Despite this investigation, no organized sponsorship of Jewish immigration resulted, but Jews continued to arrive in greater numbers than before. Describing the process of Jewish integration into Mexican society, Anita Brenner, a noted Jewish columnist and intellectual writing in 1928,

said that there were 10,000 Jews in Mexico that year, and that although there was a traditionally strong anti-judío or anti-Judas sentiment in Mexican folklore, it was not directed at the israelitas or rusos whom the Mexican met on the streets, nor at those engaged in business. Mexico could thus be considered another "Promised Land".[13] Compared to the religious conflicts which characterized the Cristero rebellion in Mexico during those years, this was a considerably peaceful and short-lived situation.

The anti-alien agitation targeted at Chinese immigrants also spread to the Jews toward the end of the 1920's. This combination became institutionalized in the establishment of the Comité Nacional Anti-Chino y Anti-Judío in Mexico City in October 1930. In a "manifesto" appearing on walls at central points in the city, the new organization attacked the Chinese and Jews, leading the Chinese Legation to lodge another protest with the Foreign Ministry. The Comité Nacional, in a formal communication with President Pascual Ortiz Rubio and the Ministers of the Interior, Industry, Commerce, and Labor, declared its intention to fight the "cruel and bloody action of foreign elements ...especially the Jews and Asians, the former for destroying our commerce and nearly all our economic activities, and the latter our race, commerce, and homes".[14]

Anti-Jewish propaganda first came to a head in May 1931 when some 250 Jewish peddlers were brutally thrown out of the central market in Mexico City, and several small business organizations, fully backed by representatives of the Mexican Congress, declared June 1 as "National Commerce Day". That day about ten thousand demonstrators marched through the main streets of the capital, in protest against Jewish vendors and other small business owners.

The demonstrators got open support from the President of Republic as well as from the "strong-man" of the regime, Calles, both of whom intended to honor them with their presence. This sent panic among Jews in Mexico City who feared an outbreak of officially-sponsored pogrom.[15]

Legislation

At the same time, Governor Rodolfo Elías Calles of the state of Sonora signed a series of laws which made it virtually impossible for the Chinese to continue living there. Chinese residents were forced to leave the state during the fall of that year. In 1932 anti-Chinese movement leader José Angel Espinoza published his book entitled "The Example of Sonora", and soon became "Supreme Chief" of the Comité Pro Raza in Mexico City. He described the achievement in Sonora as the herald for the rest of Mexico.[16] Not only did the Chinese in Sonora suffer, but Jewish merchants in Hermosilla were also ordered by the mayor to close down their businesses.

Other voices heard amid this wave of xenophobia included members of the commercial association Cámara Nacional de Comercio de Mazatlán of Sinaloa state, who protested the persecution of Chinese in neighboring Sonora, as this threatened economic losses to creditors if sudden expulsion were to occur. They were supported by the Governor of Sinaloa. In Mexico City, a pamphlet captioned "Mexicans, do not expel the Jews!" was distributed by a local intellectual, who described the demonstrations against the Jews as a plot by affluent merchants who faced competition from the cheap goods sold by these peddlers. These interventions did not stop the expulsion from Sonora, nor the demonstrations in Mexico City.[17]

Other aliens did not escape the xenophobia. The next targets were the

Syrian-Lebanese and Arabs (sometimes called "Turcos"), several of whom were also forced to leave the country. The list of hated foreigners also included immigrants from Spain. Though generally not yet the target of specific organizations, Spanish store-keepers, who monopolized farmers' crops, were treated with contempt.[18]

The common cry was to apply Article 33 of the Constitution, under which authorities could expel foreigners without trial. There was a similar cry to change the immigration laws to prevent those "undesirables" from entering the country. The latter demand was favorably received.

The immigration law passed on March 13, 1926, to replace the previous law of 1908, while excluding illiterates and expanding the list of medical reasons for which immigrants could be refused entry, did not establish racial criteria for entry. The Government was however authorized to apply further restrictive decrees on a temporary basis. The first such decree, which applied to blacks, immigrants from India, Armenians, Syrians, and other Arabs was already in place in 1927. Upon its expiry in 1929 the Department of Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior promulgated another one for the period 1930 to 1931. Visas could now also be denied Turks, Russians, and Poles who had no distinct profession except for capitalists who could prove possession of at least ten thousand pesos. The arguments used in official decrees were not very different from the xenophobic propaganda about the newcomers' economic competition. In 1929 the Foreign Ministry proposed the easing of restrictions on Turks and Poles, because of Mexico's especially friendly diplomatic relations with those countries at that time.

The restrictions and justifications advanced for them seemed well received [19], although they were effected at a time when the economic crisis

caused a natural decrease in immigration. Nevertheless, further regulations came in May and July, 1931, to bar foreign clergymen and gypsies. Restrictions thus became the rule, and were incorporated into the immigration law published in June 1932. The government reserved the right to deny entry into the country for any reason in the "public interest", and the Ministry of the Interior had the authority to establish the criteria for admittance of immigrants "based on their ability to assimilate into our environment".

This restrictive policy was brought to the extreme in February 1934 when it was decreed that " immigrant workers are indefinitely prohibited from entering the country, that is, those who intend to come in with the idea of engaging in paid activity".[20] Hitler had by then been in power for eighteen months.

B. Cárdenas' FIRST YEARS: POPULISM AND IMMIGRATION

When Calles was installed as President on December 1, 1924, Mexico was still recovering from its revolutionary cataclysm and ten years later, when Lázaro Cárdenas became President, Mexico was still feeling the effects of the Depression. During that decade, the country was led by a small group of leaders, veterans of the Revolution, the most outstanding being Calles. Even though his presidency ended in 1928, he remained the "Jefe Máximo" (Supreme Chief) of the Revolution and had every intention of remaining in that position.

By the time of the presidential elections of 1933, in which Lázaro Cárdenas become President, the main instrument for the perpetuation of Calles and his men in power had been created: the Partido Revolucionario Nacional (National Revolutionary Party). While in 1929 some fifty parties were in existence, in the 1933 elections only six were present, among which the PRN stood out. It was a fusion of many splinter parties, the army, labor unions, and the lower middle-class. With the election of Cárdenas through this unified party, Calles unknowingly was to reach the final peak of his political career. The conservative, anti-revolutionary policies he pursued contrasted sharply with Cárdenas' more leftist and populist inclinations. Land distribution was accelerated and the demands of labor unions were generally supported. This led to an open showdown in June 1935 between the "Supreme Chief" and the President, the latter having the upper hand. Calles' supporters were dismissed from the cabinet and nine months later Calles himself was forced into exile in the United States when Cárdenas suspected him of plotting against him. The Cárdenas era of Mexican history was then in full swing.[21]

Anti-alienism

Among the problems which the new administration inherited from its predecessors was the issue of immigration. The main elements of protests against immigrants, self-defense by the latter, and official policies were consolidated during the two years of the Nazi era proceeding the Cárdenas regime.

All the restrictions and prohibitions which were imposed through the various laws and regulations from 1929 to February 1934 had been summarized and indexed by the head of the Department of Migration for prompt application by the immigration officers.[22] The severity of the legislation adopted, however, did not diminish the agitation against foreigners, especially against the Chinese and Jews. The Union of Honorable Merchants, Manufacturers, and Professionals which organized the anti-Jew demonstration in June 1931 appealed to the President on January 1, 1934, to force all Jews, Arabs, Russians, and others who entered Mexico as farmers, to settle as farmers or be expelled. They maintained that "a great man in Germany, Hitler, set a good example for the civilized world by expelling all Jews. You should follow that sound example". In exchange for his action, the petitioners promised President Abelardo Rodríguez "the overwhelming applause of all Mexican social classes".[23]

José Angel Espinoza, head of the Comité Pro-Raza sent a program of his organization's protests to the Minister of the Interior in September 1933, proposing inter alia that his volunteers would form control squads to check on the economic activities of the Chinese and Jews. This proposal was reiterated in February 1934, and two months later at a festive ceremony he inaugurated the first squadron of the Legión Mexicana de Defensa (Mexican

Defense Legion), which unleashed systematic persecutions and extortion. A reporter from the nationalist newspaper El Mundo de México observed that it was "the first step in organizing nationalist militias in a European fashion". He also reported the appearance of another organization, Acción Revolucionaria Mexicanista (Mexicanist Revolutionary Action).[24]

Established on March 10, 1934, by Nicolás Rodríguez Carrasco, this organization bore a striking similarity to Nazi groups in its statement of principles, as well as in style and action. Its supreme chief, a political adventurer in Mexico with a record as a commercial swindler in the United States, decked his followers in gold-colored shirts (hence their name "Camisas Doradas"), trained them after the German S.S. storm troops, and preached a vehemently chauvinistic, anti-communist, anti-Semitic propaganda via numerous leaflets and his weekly paper, "Defensa". It was later revealed that Rodríguez kept close contact with the German legation, which provided him with finances and literature. He had his own "personal representative" in Berlin, and rabid anti-alien activities were of course his primary occupation.[25]

Diplomatic missions provided some defense for the Chinese and Jews who were attacked. The Legation of China very often complained to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and those complaints were referred for investigation to the Ministry of the Interior which usually solicited comments from state Governors, themselves passive participants in the process. The findings did not deter the chauvinistic zeal which inhibited further Chinese immigration.[26]

The Jewish community reacted to the very first attacks by establishing its defense organization, which was started in November 1930 as

"The Small Merchants' Association" which soon became "The Jewish Chamber of Industry and Commerce" (Cámara Israelita de Industria y Comercio) and undertook the political representation of the Jewish population. Whenever Jewish merchants were persecuted in Sonora or in Veracruz, the main office in Mexico city complained to the Minister of the Interior. Through the two Jewish periodicals which appeared in Mexico from 1932 the Chamber transmitted its complaints not only to the tiny local community, but also to the Jewish press abroad. The first appearance of storm squads of the Comité Pro Raza and the Camisas Doradas caused grave concern among Mexican Committee Jews, and the Mexican ambassador in Washington, disturbed by a rumor of the imminent expulsion of all Mexican Jews, asked for a detailed report.[27]

Even before Cárdenas came to power, the government needed to take action on the xenophobic atmosphere which threatened foreign immigrants. The installation of the new president made such a move all the more urgent.

The Government's Stance

Defining a position towards the fascist Gold Shirts, who openly espoused Nazi slogans and ideas opposed to the PRN government, was obviously not too difficult a task. Leftist parties and the left wing of the PRN became interested in the struggle against the vehement anti-communist and social-nationalist agitation of this group. Neither did their rumored close connections with Calles endear them to President Cárdenas. Confronted with Calles' supporters in the right wing of the PRN and the deep conflict with the church over the socialist education program introduced in the schools, the Cardenistas held deep grievances against this violent organization. The Gold Shirts, however, also found support within the government, mainly from

General Saturno Cedillo, the Minister of agriculture, a notorious conservative who joined the Cabinet after the break with Calles precisely to separate himself from the deposed jefe máximo. It was not until the Gold Shirts provoked a bloody clash with their opponents on November 20, 1935 during celebrations of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Revolution in the main square in Mexico City, that the President decided to move against them. The incident left three dead and many wounded. This and other complaints led the President to order the dissolution of the organization on February 27, 1936.[28] Thus, with respect to the 'Gold Shirts', there was a coincidence of interest between the regime and the Jews and the other persecuted immigrants. The same did not obtain with other organizations, however.

In April 1935 Espinoza's "legions" comprised 11,000 members in eleven towns, mostly in Mexico City and Mexicali, Baja California. They signed a declaration intending to deliver it personally to the President.[29] While their numbers may not have impressed the President, the movement they represented could not be ignored: it was the voice of the native-born urban lower-middle class demanding the expulsion of their competitors from the same social stratum. This demand, articulated in nationalist and chauvinistic terms, was supported by many other organizations and individuals, who all wrote to the President and the Minister of the Interior. Their hatred was directed at the Spaniards, Arabs, Poles, and Czechs, but most intensely at the Chinese and Jews. They persistently demanded the expulsion of these groups from their urban jobs, as well as the hermetic closure of borders to them. Some of those protesters represented lower-middle class associations and even labor unions [30], which touched a very sensitive nerve in Cárdenas' regime.

Soon after his inauguration, Cárdenas attempted to secure the full support of the working class for his government. His young colleague and friend, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, worked hard to create a new nation-wide union to replace the crumbling organization which was established and headed by Calles' aide, Luis Morones. A Constitutive Congress was convened in February 1936 to establish the Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos (Mexican Workers' Confederation). In addition to the defending working class interests, the CTM sought to protect "the various groups which formed the small bourgeoisie and in general the so-called middle class...", not only in order to prevent exploitation, but also to prevent the bourgeoisie from dragging them toward fascist-type movements. Through a broad popular front the CTM addressed the very stratum of the urban society whose interests the hated groups claimed to be defending. The competition for its support and the nationalistic pathos endemic in every PRN group and activity, paved the way for at least a partial acceptance of the anti-alienists' demands.[31]

The possibility of expelling the undesired aliens from Mexico by invoking Article 33 of the constitution was seriously examined in a study done by the PRN in March 1935 and presented to the Minister of the Interior. This study, the first of its kind, analyzed all the documented cases of expulsion of foreigners between 1921 and 1934, showing that during those fourteen years only 850 individuals were expelled, 402 of them in accordance with immigration regulations and the remaining 448 as undesirable aliens under Article 33 of the Constitution. The latter were almost entirely criminals, but included forty-five communist activists and fourteen clergymen. In the absence of an express policy, a draft resolution prepared by the Undersecretary for the Interior listed the bases for alien expulsion

in three categories: common crimes, political activity (denied foreigners under the Constitution), and "economic reasons whereby a foreigner should not engage in activities which affected the interests of Mexican workers or which damaged production, transportation, or consumption". The study emphatically endorsed this suggestion and proposed that Mexico could do with immigration as "...small but palpable symptoms of economic recovery" were felt. Such immigration, however, should be extremely selective and be essentially different from the previous case, which was indeed harmful.[32] This was the official party position in 1935 which entered into law from 1936 to 1937.

The new Population Law which replaced the Immigration Law on August 20, 1936 dealt with immigration as only one way to increase Mexico's population. More favored were incentives for birth-rate increase and repatriation of Mexican émigrés. Under the new law a "temporary immigrant" (inmigrante) status was created, to last five years before the permanent immigrant (inmigrado) status could be granted. The law maintained the complete prohibition on the entry of workers and immigrants who would earn a salary. Investors had to prove from then on that they were in possession of 100,000 pesos (some $20,000) if they wanted to settle in the capital city, 20,000 pesos to settle in provincial capitals, or 5,000 pesos elsewhere, but investment would be allowed only in agriculture, industry, or exports. Immigrants were not allowed to practice liberal professions, and those allowed into the country had to deposit 500 pesos toward their eventual repatriation (or expulsion). Apart from those restrictions, the new law introduced another innovation: the Quota System. This was aimed at suiting the racial composition of Mexico and serving its economic needs, with tables of annually designated quotas showing non-assimilable ethnic groups which

would be given only a token share of one hundred permits each. Latin Americans and Spaniards would not be limited. Those granted immigration permits would be encouraged to assimilate, and naturalization would be relaxed for those who married Mexican- born nationals. All immigrants had to sign a register of foreigners.[33]

More strict and nationalist legislation followed relating to official control of business permits held by immigrants. In August 1936 when the Comité Central Pro Raza requested the government to check all such permits and, in accordance with Article 33 of the Constitution, expel all shopkeepers who had previously declared themselves agriculturalists, the newly-created Departamento de Demografía of the Ministry of the Interior commissioned a study of appropriate steps to be taken. This study produced a decree signed by President Cárdenas on June 30, 1937, ordering a general review of the economic activities of the foreigners. The President was immediately applauded by several groups of small merchants and manufacturers from various cities.[34]

The Chinese, Jews, and other urban immigrants began to fear interference from an official agency, the Revisora de Antecedentes, a branch of the Demographic Department set up to check into their businesses. The government's nationalistic campaign thus created an even more xenophobic and anti-Semitic atmosphere, prompting the Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Mexico City to appeal to the President on behalf of its Jewish members. The Grand Master offered to provide a list of Jews whose integrity the Lodge was prepared to defend.[35]

The news out of Mexico City aroused public outcry in the United States. The New York Times correspondent in Mexico City was informed on

November 7 of a request by the PRN bloc in Congress for a list from the Ministry of the Interior detailing the legal status of all Jews in Mexico. This followed other proposals for anti-Jewish legislation, drawing sharp criticisms from opponents of Roosevelt and Cárdenas, as well as from American liberals, as was noted by the Mexican consul in New York with regard to the disturbing questions which were being asked by Cárdenas' supporters. The Jewish Examiner requested official information on whether lists were actually being prepared and whether anti-Jewish legislation was in the making. The consul published a statement denying the allegations, but not even Mexico's closest allies were convinced.[36]

Mexico's sensitivity to American public opinion may have prevented official persecution, but this did not change the immigration laws. The 1934 prohibition on immigrant workers which was detailed in the Information Bulletin of the Jewish representation in Berlin, deterred potential immigrants from considering Mexico as a haven for refuge. This was the view presented in 1935 by the High Commissioner for Refugees (Jewish and Other) coming from Germany, following a visit (by himself and Dr. Guy Inman) to Latin America, seeking a solution to the refugee problem.[37] By the end of 1937 when the need for emigration from Germany and from other European countries became even more urgent, Mexico was even more uninviting, especially to Jews. The Jewish immigrant aid society in Paris (HICEM) could only conclude that "under present conditions [Mexico] could not really be considered a country for immigrants".[38]

Two noted decisions by President Cárdenas gave some hope that exceptions would be made for political refugees: the admission of Leon Trotsky in December 1936 and the rescue in June 1937 of 460 children from

republican Spain. Reacting to protests generated by the admission of Trotsky, Cárdenas cited that case as demonstrating a basic principle of his regime: the provision of a secure haven for persecuted persons, which was the same response to criticisms that the money spent on the Spanish children should have benefited Mexican children instead.[39] This policy was to become even more important for Cárdenas during the second half of his six-year regime.

C. CARDENAS' LAST YEARS: THE DECLARED HAVEN OF REFUGE

A Benevolent Regime

Cárdenas made three important decisions during the second half of March 1938. First, in a dramatic broadcast to the nation the evening of March 18, he announced the return to state ownership of foreign oil companies operating in Mexico. This followed a protracted labor conflict with oil companies over salary and working conditions, and invited an immediate wave of protests from the United States and Britain, and the latter severed relations with Mexico. In the United States President Roosevelt was also bitterly criticized by those who thought that his "Good Neighbor" policy towards Latin America encouraged Mexico to assume an intolerable independence.[40] Second, through Isidro Fabela, the representative to the League of Nations at Geneva, Mexico protested the annexation of Austria. This lonesome protest threatened potentially huge financial losses to Mexico, from money advanced to Austria for a supply of arms. Mexico also stood to lose an important customer for its expropriated oil, which the expanded Reich would have become.[41]

A week later came a third decision, indirectly related to the previous two. On March 26, Cárdenas accepted Roosevelt's invitation to participate in the conference on refugees which he was convening at Evian. The invitation was intended to prove to American public opinion and the world that the United States was doing something effective for Austrian and German victims of Nazism. Cárdenas' favorable response was consistent with his effort to maintain a friendly relationship with the Roosevelt administration in spite of the oil crisis.[42]

These decisions enhanced the image of Cárdenas' Mexico as a

progressive country undergoing a social revolution while resisting fascist expansionism abroad. This was demonstrated during Cárdenas'early years in power, in his attitude toward the Italian intervention in Ethiopia, but notably in his support of the Republican government in Spain. From the very start of the Spanish civil war in July 1936, Cárdenas' Mexico was the only Latin American country to condemn the German and Italian involvement, urging the League of Nations and Western powers to bring it to an end. Mexico was also to defy a British- and French-led arms embargo against both parties in Spain by supplying arms to that country.[43]

It began to appear that Mexico was an important destination for refugees. Following the temporary asylum offered to the 460 children from Spain, a proposal was put forward late in 1937 to grant a number of the Republican intellectuals an opportunity to continue their creative work in Mexico. On the recommendation of Daniel Cosío Villegas, his ambassador to Portugal, and other Mexican intellectuals Cárdenas agreed not only to accepting them but also to dedicating funds for providing special facilities for them. Established under this scheme, the Casa de España, known today as El Colegio de México, became an academic institution for the Spanish scholarly elite. University teaching and research positions were other forms of support established by the Cárdenas government.[44]

Amid the overwhelming nationalistic fervor to consolidate government control over foreign oil companies operating in the country, Mexico, on April 10, 1938, reiterated its willingness to accept Spanish and other refugees.[45] The presumed inclusion of refugees from Austria gave reason to expect a considerable Mexican contribution. But did this actually materialize?

The Jewish Refugees

Cárdenas' declarations received considerable attention in Europe and led to immigration applications. Otto Langbein and a friend, both young history and geography teachers who escaped from Austria, applied from Rotterdam; Karl Binder, an anti-Nazi German, applied from Switzerland; and Max Tockus and Franz Muller, applied from Prague on behalf of fifty anti-Nazi activists who had escaped from Germany. They were all non-Jews seeking asylum in Mexico. Their applications were referred to the Ministry of the Interior which sent out a standard reply that "Article 84 of the present General Population Law prohibits the entry of foreign workers".[46]

The Minister of the Interior, Ignacio García Téllez, instructed Mexico's delegate to the Evian Conference, if necessary, to offer increased quotas and amendment of existing legislation aimed at improving immigration facilities. This would only be necessary if President Roosevelt pressured Latin American countries for help with the refugee problem. After the conference Primo Villa Michel, Mexico's delegate, happily informed his Foreign Minister that he did not have to make the offer.[47] Mexico was therefore not required to increase its assistance to German and Austrian refugees. Furthermore, the vague resolutions adopted at Evian, notably those related to the establishment of the Inter-Governmental Committee for Refugees, was an excuse for the Minister to delay action, as he claimed that Mexico needed clear indications from the IGC regarding German and Austrian refugees before it could formulate its own policy and that, besides, those indications were not forthcoming.[48]

Adolf Eichmann meanwhile continued working at "ridding" Austria of

Jews in the shortest possible time. There the Nazis used violence and systematic threats of detention in concentration camps to force most of the 185,000 Jews and many non-Jewish anti-Nazis to flee. Applicants seeking to emigrate began to flood consulates, including Mexico's.

Inundated with requests for assistance and guidance, the Jewish community in Vienna asked the HICEM office in Paris in July 1938 whether there was an effective Jewish group in Mexico which could provide work for immigrants and seek a waiver of the reported requirement of a 750-peso deposit per person with settlement only in interior provinces. HICEM reported that there was one such organization, but that it was not certain how effective it was.[49] This implied an organizational weakness in international Jewish groups.

But, contrary to such a report, the small Jewish community in Mexico was well-organized and active in international issues of interest to Jews. When international Jewish organizations declared a boycott on German goods in 1935, the German Embassy sent a formal protest to the Mexican foreign ministry. In 1937, in spite of their problems, local Jews received a positive response to their appeal for President Cárdenas to vote in the League of Nations in favor of the Zionist Movement.[50]

Until May 1938, the Jewish Chamber of Industry and Commerce, defended Jewish interests in Mexico, which were then mainly economic. After Mexico's declarations in defense of Austrian and German refugees, a Comité Pro Refugiados en México (Committee for Refugees in Mexico) was set up under Chamber of Commerce leaders León Behar and Jacob Landau. Other members included Moisés Rosenberg, editor of the Jewish newspaper Der Weg, and other Jewish activists. Contact was maintained with Jewish organizations overseas,

such as the HIAS, the American Jewish Committee, and the Zionist organization, but it was not until late in the summer of 1938 that the Committee established a formal working relationship with international Jewish immigration aid societies such as the HIAS and HICEM.[51] The situation in Mexico had by then worsened.

The official decision to receive refugees, as well as the news of Mexico's position at Evian, was accompanied by anti-Semitic reactions. Ismael Falcón, a PRN member of the Congress, led a delegation to the Minister of the Interior to protest against the arrival of Jews, and the Physicians' unions brought their concern over the arrival of Jewish doctors to the minister as well as to the President. Several newspapers also joined the anti-refugee campaign.[52] Even without those protests, the Minister was giving the standard reply about the existing laws to some 2,000 Austrian applicants, while several other applications were not processed as the general policy was still "under review". The Jewish Committee for Refugees was told at a meeting with the Minister on July 20, 1938, that no favorable changes should be expected. The meeting of the Consejo de Población (Population Council), an inter-Ministerial consultative body, a week later was further evidence of the government's position which diminished any little hope there may have been.[53] Then came the problem of tourist-immigrants. Faced with threats from Eichmann and frustrated by the need for immigration visas, many Austrian and German Jews went to Veracruz on tourist visas valid for six months, hoping to obtain legal immigrant status once in Mexico. The Refugee Committee was surprised by the appearance of these destitute illegal immigrants. By September the Committee started supporting many of them who could not support themselves

since they were not allowed to work. Their most immediate needs were met by setting up a camp, but the problem of their position after the visas expired would still remain.[54]

On October 6 the Ministry of the Interior dispatched undercover agents who searched the camp, interrogated the immigrants, and confiscated their documents. The next day fourteen of these tourist-immigrants were arrested and later released and given thirty days to leave Mexico, which was several months before their legal visas expired. In desperation these "tourists" declared that they would rather commit suicide than be deported from Mexico, and thus the Refugee Committee had the task of rescuing them. The argument that they were political refugees and as such entitled to asylum in Mexico was flatly rejected by the Minister of the Interior, who issued a statement declaring them to be merely "bogus tourists", and not political refugees as Mexico understood it, and that they could not be allowed to stay since the Inter-Governmental Committee had yet not determined what Mexico's obligations concerning refugees were to be.[55]

On October 22, while the fate of the fourteen refugees was being decided, another group of twenty-two Jewish tourist-refugees arrived at the port of Veracruz on board the SS Orinoco. Alerted in time, immigration authorities prevented their landing. The ship proceeded to the port of Tampico and returned to Veracruz a few days later before sailing back to Europe via Cuba. This allowed enough time for efforts to be made on their behalf: appeals from the United States reached President Cárdenas; the Jewish Chamber of Commerce in Mexico City requested temporary admission for them, offering to guarantee their eventual departure; the Refugee Committee sent a member to the port to conduct what he later described as "a real trade in

human beings". All efforts failed: the Orinoco had to sail back with twenty-one of its Jewish tourist-refugees.[56]

Another ship, the SS Iberie arriving on November 1, 1938, with fifteen German Jews, was more fortunate as the Refugee Committee agent managed to negotiate their landing for a price. Such was the nature of this clandestine immigration: people, either individually or in very small groups, sneaking into the country.[57]

News of the Kristalnacht of November 9, 1938, still did not placate the hostility to Jews. Vicente Lombardo Toledano, the fiery Mexican labor leader and president of the Confederation of Latin Workers, addressed a conference sponsored by the anti-Nazi German Cultural League at the National Theater's Palacio de Bellas Artes on November 14. This turned into an overwhelming mass protest against the persecution of Jews which was supported, belatedly, by Mexican intellectuals.[58] Anti-Semitic sentiments continued nonetheless.

The government soon gave the nationalist anti-Semites a chance, perhaps unintentionally, to use the same prestigious Palacio de Bellas Artes as a platform for spreading their hatred. A presidential resolution issued on December 8 devoted the last two weeks of 1938 to looking at population problems. Among the activities was a conference on demographic and immigration matters was held, convened at the National Theater in December and involving representatives from ministries and private organizations in Mexico. The main feature was the repatriation of thousands of Mexicans from the United States, but issues directly related to the admission of immigrants and political refugees were dealt with both there and in public opinion and discussions. The immigration topics at the Congress detailed

the hostility towards Jew in a report with recommendations and accompanied by impassioned speeches. The Mexican-born delegates did not join those from the Jewish Chamber of Commerce in condemning the hostility. The Congress threw out extremist proposals. Presiding over the closing session, Francisco Trejo, head of the population division of the Ministry of the Interior, proposed a compromise: that nationalist anti-Semites replace the word "Jews" with "aliens" in their proposals, and that they work with the Jewish Chamber of Industry and Commerce to remove undesirable features from the proposals. These proposals along with claims coming from official circles about the non-assimilation of Jews represented another bitter experience for the Jews.[59]

Against the odds, however, the Jewish community continued to work on behalf of refugees. The main Jewish organizations joined together to form the Comité Central Israelita of which the Refugees' Committee became a sub-commission. The new organization launched a massive fund-raising campaign for refugee work. HICEM, through HIAS of New York, pledged an initial sum of two thousand dollars toward defraying the immediate costs of landing more tourist-refugees and toward helping legalize those already in Mexico, who numbered less than 120 persons in mid-November. The Comité Central, as the united representation of the community, used all the contacts previously established with the government, and conferred with the Minister of the Interior and his aides on the prospects for further Jewish immigration.[60]

The prospects looked very dim. The quotas for 1939 actually cut the number of immigrants allowed from Germany to one thousand, compared to the five thousand designated in 1938. Austria, which had a quota of five

thousand in 1938, was dropped from the list. In addition, the decree indicated that "only exceptional cases of foreigners who had lost their nationality and stateless persons would be admitted for the benefit of the country and would get a special permit issued by the Ministry of the Interior". But the Minister, though repeatedly stating that Mexico should not close its doors to victims of dictatorships, was more opposed to immigration which would affect Mexican workers and farmers, especially in the lower-middle class.[61]

Rescue Through Agriculture

The Refugee Committee and the Comité Central concluded that the only prospect for Jews to be admitted into Mexico in large numbers was through the creation of a special scheme. A wealthy member of the Community who owned a large property (7,000 acres or 2,800 hectares) in Coscapa, Veracruz, thus agreed to lease it on concessionary terms to the Comité Central, which started a collective farm. He feared that if it remained unoccupied, the land would be confiscated or distributed to peasants.

The first group of twelve refugees went to the estate in March 1939 with tractors and other machinery, and cultivated sugar cane, corn, tobacco and pineapples. It was believed that the colony could accommodate one hundred families. Most of the "pioneers" were not very excited about the mission forced on them to prove to the Mexican government and people that the Jews could be farmers too. The settlers also had to struggle with the hot climate, mosquitos, and the hardships of subtropical plantation life which soon forced one to leave. The Comité Central was thus left with a useless investment of 15,000 pesos ($3,000) and faced an open scandal.[62]

Some of the same settlers tried to establish themselves as farmers in another region of Mexico near Monterrey in the state of Coahuila, and began purchasing individual fifty-hectare farms on a ranch called San Gregorio. They bought tools, seeds, and some cows and started to grow wheat and fruits and sell milk and dairy products. When their money ran out they turned to the small community in Monterrey and in Laredo, Texas, for help. Their new status as settlers and "investors" enabled this small group to officially to change their legal status, and some obtained permits for relatives.[63]

Settlement as a means of large-scale Jewish immigration appealed to several adventurers. It seemed that Mexico's indebtedness to Great Britain and to the United States after the expropriation of oil companies provided an opportunity for a Jewish state to be established in Baja California (Lower California). Remote, sparsely-populated, and expansive, this territory could accommodate hundreds of thousands and even millions of Jews. It was proposed that Jewish organizations could buy the territory from Mexico, with the support of the Anglo-Saxon powers, as this would relieve Britain of the Palestinian complexities. Another proposal, relying on the support of Jewish investors on the East Coast, was for Cárdenas to issue $100,000,000 colonization bonds which would be purchased by international Jewish organizations for large-scale Jewish immigration. These proposals came from naive entrepreneurs who were depending on Cárdenas' good will, oblivious to Mexico's nationalist politics which rendered them totally absurd.[64]

The Mexican government, however, gave some thought to increased Jewish immigration under a colonization scheme. In January 1939, Ramón Beteta, Cárdenas' trusted and brilliant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs,

examined this question in a fourteen-page memorandum. Weighing the pro's and con's and presenting some negative stereotypes of Jews, he came up with an acceptable eleven-point plan. Six months later, at the Mexican embassy in Washington, Beteta met with members of Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Political Refugees, the leader of the Quaker American Friends Service Committee and members of the JDC and of Spanish Republican organizations. The meeting was presided over by Cárdenas' close friend and Roosevelt's right- hand man, Frank Tannenbaum. A coordinating committee was formed headed by Frank Aydelotte, President of Swarthmore College and head of the Friends' group. Three days later, at Aydelotte's house, Beteta met privately with Quaker and JDC officials, including Dr. Joseph Rosen of Agro Joint. Beteta gave Cárdenas a detailed report on all the meetings, mentioning an agreement on the feasibility of large-scale multinational settlement. Aydelotte visited Cárdenas in Mexico two months later and returned in September with Bernhard Kohn and Joseph Schwartz of the JDC to conclude an agreement.[65]

Emerging from these consultations was a decree apparently based on Beteta's plan and which Cárdenas signed on November 13, 1939. It referred to the establishment of a colony of 1,500 foreign and 1,500 Mexican families in the district of Huimanguillo in the interior state of Tabasco, near the southern part of the Gulf of Mexico. The settlers would consist of stateless Germans, Austrians, Czechs, Hungarians, and Poles who had escaped into Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, England, and the United States. They should have valid re-entry permits for those countries in case they breached the basic terms of their admission, which was to engage only in agriculture and processing of their own crops. The structure of the colony would follow

the Population Council's guidelines, which prescribed a layout of the Mexican- and immigrant-owned farms in a pattern similar to a chess board. Land and equipment for the Mexicans would be the same as for the immigrants, but would be paid for by the state.[66] That the immigrants in question were Jews was implicit, but well understood.

The Governor of Tabasco, Francisco Trujillo Gurria, was an ardent supporter of the project; the director of the Immigration Department, Landa y Pina, gave his unreserved endorsement; but Foreign Minister Eduardo Hay tried to dissuade Cárdenas, since he did not wish the Jewish colonization to cause severe criticism against the government. Hay shared his reservations with the Interior Minister, who was very much in agreement. An unusually hesitant Cárdenas recanted his decision, and on November 17 requested the governor to halt further activity until public opinion on the matter was observed. Cárdenas' signature appeared over the note "suspended by order of the President" in the margin of the original resolution.[67]

This invited press reaction, as was expected. Details of the plan were followed by nationalist statements, criticisms, and suspicion that the real objectives of the scheme were generated by editorials in opposition papers. The program was laid to rest, never to be resurrected. Some $200,000 allocated for the project by the JDC was redirected to more urgent needs, which deepened with the approach of summer 1940 and as the Germans invaded Holland, Belgium, and France, bringing an end to the European "Phony War".[68]

The Tabasco settlement proposal was another example of the frail prospects for Jewish emigration to Mexico. Even though it was very small, restricted to agriculture, planned in a manner to ensure rapid assimilation, and fully endorsed by the JDC, the project was strongly opposed. Since the

nationalists and a section of the press had strong influence, the ministers did not wish to challenge them anyway. The President followed suit.

The Spanish Refugees

Opposition was also voiced against the announced willingness to take in Spanish republican refugees. The Liga Nacional in Mexico City, which in December 1938 denounced and punished alleged law-breaking by Spaniards, along with other nationalist vigilante committees were among those voices. The locally established Spanish business community composed largely of staunch pro-Francoites joined the opposition to the new arrivals. They openly rejoiced at the eventual collapse of the Republic.

In contrast to the Jewish refugees, the Spanish Republicans received no support from their compatriots in Mexico.[69] The "red" Spaniards were also resisted by the "Sinarquista" movement, which fused into its ideology Catholic nationalism, Hispanic pre-independence sympathies, and social justice slogans. The slogans were directed mainly at the rural population. This fascist organization, started in 1937, grew rapidly from 90,000 members in 102 local committees in 1939 to over half a million by 1943.[70]

The impact of this combined opposition was felt in January 1939, following the decision of the Spanish government to disband the International Brigades, and Mexico had to take in some of the volunteers who could not return to their countries. Cárdenas instructed his ambassador to Spain, Adalberto Tajeda, to send the German, Austrian, and Italian brigadiers, but later offered asylum to all East Europeans who would have been persecuted by their fascist governments if they returned home. These included 313 Poles, 98 Czechs, 55 Romanians, and many volunteers of other nationalities.

Protests again emerged in Mexico while plans were being made in Barcelona to transport 1,391 ex-combatants. Lengthy protest letters were sent to the President by political organizations in Mexico City, Puebla, Veracruz, Baja California, and other areas after bitter criticisms appearing in the press cited communist affiliations of the volunteers, maintaining that the newcomers would be an even greater threat to Mexicans than those previously classified as undesirables, and that the neglected needs of nationals should be addressed before helping suffering foreigners. David Alfaro Siqueiros, Mexico's noted communist painter, himself a brigadier just returning from Spain as head of the Mexican volunteers, welcomed Cárdenas' decision. Veterans of the American Abraham Lincoln Battalion in Los Angeles sent greetings to Cárdenas, as did many other Mexican left-wing groups. The opposition evidently got its way. It was never to be clarified whether it was because of this opposition or the difficulties in Spain, that up to March 1939 the brigadiers were still waiting departure.[71]

The Spanish Republic had by then come to its end. After the Nationalists crossed the Ebro in November they launched a massive attack on Catalonia which took them into Barcelona on January 26, 1939. The stream of Spanish refugees crossing into France became virtually a deluge by February. France and England officially recognized Franco's government on February 27, and on April 1 the rest of the Republican army surrendered. There were by then between 400,000 and 500,000 refugees, civilian and military, in the South of France.[72]

In mid-February Narciso Bassols, Mexican ambassador to France, requested permission to issue entry permits immediately to persons in particular need and recommended the following guidelines to assist the

refugees more effectively:

> a) The operation was to involve only those who had a demonstrated permanent need to emigrate;
>
> b) The Spanish Republican government and other local organizations were to help select and look after the émigrés;
>
> c) Under no circumstance should Mexico be requested to provide funds for the refugees;
>
> d) Economic production units,preferably agricultural, were to be set up for them, and groups of intellectuals were to be provided with facilities to maintain the political, spiritual and cultural values of the Spanish people;
>
> e) No immigration fee would be charged, nor would there be time or occupational restrictions;
>
> f) On the instruction of the Legation in Paris, Mexican consulates could issue entry visas.

The recommendations were accepted, and with the go-ahead to handle individual cases, negotiations were started with the exiled Republican government with respect to the broader plan.[73]

Two events contributed to the conclusion of a favorable agreement: the establishment on March 31 of SERE, the Servicio de Emigración para Republicanos Españoles (Emigration Service for Spanish Republicans), as an official agency, and the March arrival in Mexico of the Spanish cruise ship Vita with Spanish treasures worth fifty million dollars.

Having identified the agency and financing, Bassols and his aides proceeded to select the émigrés and to issue Mexican visas. There was a general sense of an emergency, arising from two main factors. One was the fear that, under agreement with Franco, the French government could yield to Franco's demand to "repatriate" those he wanted. The other was the horrible conditions at the overcrowded and poorly-maintained concentration camps at Saint Cyprien, Gurs, Rivesalte, and other places. A third phenomenon which

had a definite impact was the outbreak of the Second World War.

Five major shiploads of Spanish refugees arrived in Mexico before Hitler invaded Poland. The most noted of these was the SS Sinaia which arrived in Veracruz on June 13 with some 1,600 immigrants. It was welcomed with speeches by the Minister of the Interior and the leader of the CTM, and cheering crowds lined the docks and streets to greet them. This was obviously an effort to counter the sustained criticisms of the continuing immigration.[74]

Lázaro Cárdenas defended his decision to admit the veterans from the International Brigade by describing them as people seeking to invest their energies and possessions in new industries and agriculture in regions which needed population. Before the Sinaia arrived he asked the Minister of the Interior to distribute the Spanish workers and peasants across five different Mexican states. The Minister, assisted by the governors, would identify sites for settling the peasants and find out what new industries could be best created for the urban workers to apply their skills.[75]

Cárdenas later requested, in January 1946, the establishment of an Inter-Secretarial Committee charged with planning and establishing a Spanish agricultural colony in Coscapa, Veracruz, on land confiscated from the aborted Jewish colony. This colony would be a model of modern agricultural technology where Spanish peasants were more experienced than the Mexican peasants. There would be teachers, doctors, organizers, and technicians, among others, who would also serve the adjacent ejidos, the Mexican villages of communal land-holding and cooperative farms. Despite the substantial administrative and financial investment, this was a failed venture, and although some Spanish farmers were put on the land, the well-conceived

Primera Unidad Técnica de Servicios Ejidal (First Technical Unit of Ejido Services) apparently never left the drawing board.[76]

A major colonization project for the Spaniards was planned and organized by SERE at Santa Clara, near the town of Chihuahua, where a very large property was bought and some 450 colonists settled on a cooperative farm, with a number of tractors and other machinery provided. The project was intended to attest to the claim that Spaniards contributed to Mexican agriculture. This was another failure and by 1944 only 68 colonists were left, the others having abandoned the land. The large project was thus reduced to a small village and no other such enterprise was ever attempted.[77]

The lack of sustained interest by the settlers and the lack of experienced farmers among the immigrants brought on resentment from the Mexican villagers, many of whom were influenced by Sinarquista propaganda. These were the main reasons for the failure of the agricultural ventures, despite the priority attached to them by the Mexican government and the Comité Técnico de Ayuda a los Españoles en México, the Spanish agency which handled the funds and projects for absorption of immigrants.

Though individual Spaniards settled in rural Mexico, the vast majority went to urban centers and particularly to Mexico City. Language and culture enabled them to compete more successfully than the Jews with a much wider section of the Mexican middle class, causing much resentment and criticism that the massive emigration from Spain was adding to the existing economic and social problems. The Cárdenas government however, was not deterred as Spanish immigrants continued to flow into Mexico during the last quarter of 1939 after the war broke out, even though in smaller groups.[78]

Early in 1940 Mexico solicited help from other Latin American

countries on behalf of the 200,000 refugees who were still in French concentration camps, but only meager responses emerged from a conference on Spanish Refugee Relief convened in Mexico City in February and in which five other American countries (including the United States) participated. The schisms among the Spanish republicans, together with the bitter criticism of France's treatment of the refugees, were more dominant than the pledges and plans of action.[79]

Cárdenas continued to sponsor the Spanish migration to Mexico, though his Minister of the Interior expressed reservations. In February García Téllez asked for presidential permission for consuls to issue entry permits, which was then being transmitted directly to them, to be first passed through the Foreign Ministry, as was the normal procedure. In April he recommended that a selective approach be applied to the Spanish immigrants as well, to admit only those who had enough money to support themselves, or who had pre-arranged employment. Of all the others, only experienced and modernized agriculturalists would be selected. His rationale was the high unemployment among Spaniards in Mexico City, affecting 1,155 of them. Being once again fully in charge of immigration, he proceeded to implement his proposals.[80]

With Germany's victory over France in June 1940, Spanish emigration to Mexico become more urgent as well as difficult. A flood of refugees: French, Belgian, Dutch, and many others, crowded the ports in southern France in competition for space on board the few remaining vessels. Spanish refugees, usually poorer than the others, were at a disadvantage as they could not board Spanish ships. The danger confronting many of them as a result of the German influence over the Pétain regime, was second only to the threat to the Jews. Mexico's role then became more one of protector than of

haven of refuge.

A tense situation developed in Mexico at that time. Presidential elections were set for July 7, and a bitter contest was fought between General Juan Andrés Almazán, who was supported by the rightist Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party) and the Sinarquistas, and General Manuel Avila Camacho, Cárdenas' Minister of War and the ruling party's candidate. There was also tension within the ruling party among moderates whose candidate was Avila Camacho, and the frustrated left wing, which had an open alliance with the communists. Mexico was further shaken in June 1940 with the assassination of Leon Trotsky by a young agent of Joseph Stalin who broke into Trotsky's home. Much to the applause of the rightist opposition, Cárdenas was forced to crack down on the communists, and even celebrities like Diego Rivera and David Siqueiros had to flee the country or face legal persecution.[81]

Armed clashes were feared as July 7 approached, and violence actually broke out on that day in the capital and several other towns. When Avila Camacho was declared winner, the defeated Almazanistas challenged the results, creating a tense atmosphere for the next few months.

In spite of its domestic upheaval, Mexico was very active on behalf of the Spanish refugees in France in August 1940. Following negotiations with the Government at Vichy, a comprehensive though vaguely worded agreement was reached under which Mexico would become protector of the Spanish republicans in France. Mexico declared a willingness to receive "all Spaniards who were refugees in France, its colonies and countries under French protectorship". All they needed to do was to "accept the offer extended to them by a friendly country in the name of greater human

understanding". Mexico also undertook to support the Spaniards and expressed its hope that the French government would ensure their personal safety. The Mexican proposals were submitted personally to Marshal Pétain and formally accepted by a note from Boudoin his Minister of Foreign Affairs. It was for the most part a unilateral diplomatic note that no doubt represented Mexico's honor. All who received Mexican visas were taken under Mexican protection until a boat could be found to take them to Mexico. Two ancient castles near Marseille were rented and named after Lázaro Cárdenas and Avila Camacho to house the many refugees under the Mexican flag pending their departure.

The request in October from the Mexican Minister in Berlin to the German Foreign Minister to allow a French ship to be used as transport was given a cold reception because of Mexico's close relations with the United States. He was promised, however, that the request would be given due consideration. A month later Mexico spearheaded a joint appeal by several Latin American nations for President Roosevelt, who had just been reelected to a third term in office, to authorize American boats to transport refugees from Marseilles or Casablanca.[83]

Cárdenas and the Jews

The benevolence of Cárdenas' government toward the Spanish refugees contrasted sharply with its attitude to Jewish refugees. During the week of the arrival of the SS Sinaia, ninety-eight Jews were turned away from Mexican shores in the SS Flandre. Both events were given front-page coverage in the press and a sharp-tongued critic of the government sarcastically contrasted the fate of the Spanish refugees arriving on board the Sinaia with those who

came from Sinai.[84]

Cárdenas' image as protector of the oppressed was hailed in the many appeals he received from individuals who were seeking refuge in Mexico. These requests were all passed to García Téllez and processed under the even more restrictive regulations issued during the war.

In March 1940 El Universal of Mexico City was officially informed that the admission of tourists, students, and visitors from Europe had been suspended since the beginning of the year. In April the entrance of rentistas (persons living on private income) was prohibited and the minimum investment required of investors for their admittance was raised to fifty thousand pesos (some $10,000), of which ten thousand would have to be deposited before visas would be issued. Then in August 1940 Mexico, spurred by the Pan-American meeting in Havana which discussed the dangers of the "Fifth Column", barred all immigrants from Europe except Spanish republicans.[85]

Some of the requests for the admittance of famous anti-Nazi writers and intellectuals were favorably treated by Cárdenas. A well-publicized case came in August 1940 when, after an appeal signed by Lombardo Toledano and many prominent Mexicans, twenty German writers and intellectuals (including some famous Jews then in the South of France) were granted asylum. Less influential petitioners were not as successful.[86] Individual Jews who appealed directly to Cárdenas came upon the strict regulations.

The Jewish Comité Central in Mexico, backed financially by the JDC of New York, tried to help. Early in 1940 it found a way to legalize the status of its protégés, paying 250 pesos ($50) per person. The Comité's agents sometimes succeeded in landing small groups of refugees who arrived

under various pretexts. Such successes were not very frequent, however; in late August, when the SS Quanza arrived at Veracruz with ninety-eight refugees holding transit visas to Guatemala, it was not allowed to dock. Several other Jewish passengers who arrived on the same boat properly documented as investors were allowed in, and the local official used his discretion to allow one Goldschmidt-Rothschild family, arguing that the individuals in question were not Jews.[87] That incident as well as the insistence on inflexibility with regard to poorly documented Jewish refugees implied the existence of a systematic anti-Jew policy on the part of the Ministry of the Interior.

On the other hand, the success of the Comité in landing other Jewish refugees who arrived on Japanese vessels at Mexico's Pacific ports, attested to the possibility of flexibility in applying the regulations. Such cases included small groups of thirty-five, nine or even less, but the costs involved were considerable.88 The success in bringing in more people legally and illegally during the War did not, however, make Cárdenas' Mexico much of a refuge from the Holocaust.

D. THE PRESIDENCY OF MANUEL AVILA CAMACHO

On December 1, 1940, Lázaro Cárdenas handed over the presidency to his successor, Manuel Avila Camacho. A domestically divided Mexico was soon to heal its political wounds and enter an era of prosperity, with full employment, rapid industrialization, and soaring incomes for the urban elite. This turn of history was created by the War and by the close alliance which Camacho nurtured with the United States for the benefit of Mexico. Germany's attack on Russia on June 21, 1941, was another important factor insofar as it brought even the extreme left to support Camacho's pro-US policy. Another crucial development was the conclusion, on November 19, 1941, of a comprehensive agreement which terminated the claims of American oil companies and other American claimants, while ensuring economic stability for Mexico.

Mexico had by then severed economic relations with Germany and in August 1941 closed its consulates in the Reich, and the attack on Pearl Harbor led to Mexico's breaking off all relations with the Axis Powers, declaring war on May 30. The friendly relations with the United States were reaffirmed when Roosevelt traveled to Monterrey on April 20, 1943, to meet with Avila Camacho. This marked the first official visit to Mexico by any leader of the 'Giant to the North', and the economic spin-offs were immediately visible.[89]

With unemployment and economic competition in Mexico thus brushed aside, the main arguments against immigration should have disappeared--but then came the war.

Mexico fully endorsed the decisions adopted in July 1940 by the

Foreign Ministers of the American States calling for the supervision and restriction of immigration of potential "Fifth Columnist" immigrants. This position became even firmer after the Rio de Janeiro Conference in January 1942 recommended the registration and eventual detention of suspected Axis nationals. Decrees for registration were issued in 1941 and Avila Camacho ordered an end to the admittance of immigrants from Europe, starting April 10, 1942. The President however, reserved the right to "...make exceptions if there is sufficient reason for such action", according to a report appearing in the CTM's paper El Popular.[90]

What was the real attitude of the Avila Camacho administration toward its enemies' victims?

The Spanish Republicans

The new administration inherited the broad though vague agreement which had been concluded with the French Government at Vichy but apparently was not disposed to continuing Cárdenas' policy of unrestricted Spanish immigration. An important indication in this regard was the resolution signed by Avila Camacho on January 21, 1941, by which the legation in France was to introduce a thorough selection of immigrants. Admission would be denied all those of liberal professions except those whose international prominence would make them useful to Mexico, or those whose lives were in real danger. All immigrants were to give written consent to reside wherever assigned, at least while they were supported financially; and in order to prevent clashes with Mexicans as had previously occurred, they would be concentrated in special centers from which they would be sent to their destinations. The same decree also sought to give Mexico control over the

operations and finances of JARE. Its status as an official and fully independent Spanish agency was deemed incompatible with Mexican laws. It therefore needed reorganizing, and the Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Relations would have a role in its operations.

In his first annual speech in September 1941, Avila Camacho boasted of Mexico's role as a secure haven for all politically or racially oppressed people and that, "regarding immigrants,... we have always preferred those who by their culture and their blood are easier to assimilate into our nationality" a clear reference to Spaniards.

He elaborated on his selective immigration policy which denied entry to 'foreign elements' who spread divisive and vicious propaganda, which may also have been a direct reference to some of the Spaniards or the International Brigades.[91]

Notwithstanding a world at war and most of the other neutrals' disinterest in the Spanish republicans' cause, President Avila Camacho continued to act as, and was considered, the sole protector of the Spanish refugees. Appeals for his intervention came from home and abroad: Edward Barsky, chairman of the United American Spanish Aid Committee of New York, informed him in January 1941 of a successful campaign to buy a ship for transporting Spanish refugees from France, and sought Mexico's official protection and representation in Vichy; two pro-Spanish relief agencies in Buenos Aires in May and June 1941 asked Mexico to provide a boat to transport food and supplies to Spaniards in concentration camps; and a union in Guadalajara urged Avila Camacho to negotiate with British authorities to give safe passage to a ship which was to transport refugees. They were all assured that Mexico was making every effort adequately to protect the

Spanish refugees in France, but got no reply on specific steps being taken.[92]

Mexico's consulate-general in Marseille in the meantime continued to issue special visas to the refugees. In March 1941, ninety-four new visas representing 157 persons were issued, and in April of that same year, 338 were granted to a total of 734 persons. They were thus better protected and some were eventually lodged in two refugee camps near Marseille. Actual emigration from France to Mexico became even more difficult because the lack of transportation, and a decree by the government at Vichy denying exit permits to all able-bodied men aged eighteen to forty-eight. The selective immigration policy was therefore rendered theoretical, and the minimal number of immigrants, although 1,465 entry permits were registered and reported to President Avila Camacho during 1941.[93]

When Mexico severed relations with Vichy's German masters, after 1941, its influence in France began to wane. Citing the Mexico-Vichy agreement, various groups continued to request Avila Camacho to intervene on behalf of the persecuted people. But even when he intervened, it had little effect.[94] Relations with Vichy did not end with Mexico's entering the war, but its protective powers ended with the occupation of France five months later, on November 11, 1942.

At that same time, Mexico assumed a greater role in the direct administration of the Spaniards' affairs. On November 27, 1942, exercising the extraordinary powers conferred on him by the War Emergencies Law, Avila Camacho signed a decree entrusting the administration of JARE and its funds to a mixed commission comprised of two representatives of the government and one appointed by the Spaniards. The rationale he advanced for the formation

of the Comisión Administradora del Fondo de Auxilio a los Republicanos Españoles was that JARE had not complied with the previous resolution and had kept some ten million pesos in US currency from control. The continuing bitter strife between the Spanish parties provided political support for that decision from followers of Juan Negrín who complained constantly of discrimination by supporters of Indalecio Prieto. The financial situation, in particular with respect to the treasures brought into Mexico on board the Vita, remained unclear but some fifteen million pesos were handed over to the new administration. On March 12, 1943, the representatives of JARE abdicated, leaving the mixed commission with only the Mexican members.

Financial support to some refugees in France was continued through the Swedish representation there, and transportation fees were paid for by the few Spanish immigrants who managed to sail from Lisbon. The cost of these trips, which brought new immigrants, totalled 65,350 pesos in 1943 and 94,041 pesos in 1944, representing 4.09 percent and 4.99 percent respectively of total expenditures in those two years.[96]

Mexico's role as protector of the Spanish Republicans abroad revived shortly after the Allies consolidated their hold on the French colonies in North Africa. There were several thousand Spanish refugees who were kept by the French government in labor camps, many of them forced to work on the cruel trans-Sahara railroad project. When they were granted partial freedom in November 1942, thousands of them expressed a desire to migrate to Mexico, putting that country's goodwill to the test once more. Avila Camacho's government agreed in principle to receive them, though only after a selection process. Lists of some 1,600 names and personal data were transmitted by the American Embassy to the Mexican government and were

screened by a joint Mexican-Spanish Committee that picked out the farmers, fishermen, and mechanics, among others. The US War Department agreed to transport the Spaniards to the United States and the American Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, headed by Edward Barsky was to provide the necessary funds for transportation. The whole operation was due to start in 1944.[97]

The number of Spaniards who had arrived was very small in the two previous years. After 1,105 were registered in 1942 only very few arrived in 1943. During 1944 the consular division of the Ministry of Foreign Relations issued 1,424 entry permits to Spaniards, but the number of actual arrivals remains unclear.[98]

During those two years Mexico became involved in yet another major refugee scheme: a temporary asylum for Polish nationals.

Poles from Iran [99]

On December 27, 1942, General Wladyslaw Sikorski, the Prime Minister of the Polish government-in-exile, arrived in Mexico City on an official visit which lasted several days. At the conclusion of his meetings with President Avila Camacho and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, an agreement was signed whereby Mexico offered temporary asylum to an unspecified number of Polish refugees. These were among some 42,000 Polish civilians and 72,000 soldiers allowed to leave after two and a half years in the eastern and northern parts of the Soviet Union. They were then sent to India and Iran and their presence at the back door of the Soviet Union prior to the victory at Stalingrad, that crucial point in the war, was considered by the British as posing certain problems. One problem related to feeding and

looking after so many unproductive civilians. The British wanted to send them elsewhere. Contacts with Mexico and the United States had actually started two months before Sikorski's visit, and Britain played an vital, albeit silent role in achieving the agreement.

The terms of the agreement were: the refugees were to remain in Mexico only for the duration of the war; their arrival, maintenance, and repatriation would be paid for by the Polish government; and they should stay where the Mexicans assigned them and not engage in any work which could compete with Mexicans. With respect to the latter, the definition of work was left entirely to the discretion of the Mexican authorities. No specific numbers were referred to, but the British envisaged that Mexico would take the remaining 28,000 still in Iran and East Africa. There was mention of budgeting in 1943 for 3,000 to 5,000 although the press reported a minimum of 20,000 being budgeted. [100]

The two most critical problems--funds and transportation-- were soon resolved; on his return from Mexico, General Sikorski met with President Roosevelt and following this meeting $3 million was allocated from Lend-Lease funds and put in a special account at the disposal of the Polish 'government'. This money was designated for the transportation and maintenance of three to five thousand refugees in Mexico in 1943, and would be supervised by Herbert H. Lehman, Head of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations. This one-year budget was 15 million Mexican pesos, equal to the total assets of the Spanish fund administered by the Mexican Committee.[100]

The problem of transportation was also resolved soon after the agreement was signed with Mexico. Despite the great distance between the

Iranian ports and San Francisco, where the Poles were to be taken before going to Mexico by train, the British War Transportation Ministry arranged the trip without difficulty. In February 1943 the officer in charge of Refugee Affairs at the Foreign Office was informed that an American vessel with space for 2,000 refugees would be sailing from Bombay to San Francisco that month, and that there would be another two for an additional 4,000 refugees in March and April.[102]

The speedy action of the British came up against two obstacles: the actual reluctance of the Polish officials to send their nationals to far away Mexico, and the slowness and carelessness of the Mexican officials. The reservations by the Poles in the Middle East, and later by the government in London, were soon overcome.[103] The Mexican pace of action was speeded up by the determined efforts of the British Minister, the American Ambassador, and the Polish representative. On March 25, as the Mexican officials failed to provide a definite solution for locating the Poles, the three diplomats called on the Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs and urged him to speed up the work. Another joint appeal by diplomats from the three countries finally produced an acceptable offer on April 9, 1943, for a refugee center. It was to be established on the Hacienda Santa Rosa, a ranch ten kilometers from the city of León, Guanajuato.[104]

Fourteen hectares of land, a large old Spanish-style main building and an old flour mill several stories high were the main assets of this once great estate which the post-revolutionary land reform stripped of its grandeur. Herbert Lehman's agent and two local assistants got about 250 workers to convert the existing buildings and structures quickly into a suitable refugee center.

In the meantime, the first group of Poles was being assembled in Bombay. After preparations were made, 706 of them along with many wounded soldiers and others boarded the SS Hermitage, a US Army vessel, and set out on their six-week journey to Los Angeles through Australia, New Zealand, and a long detour to avoid Japanese U-boats. Their first stop in America was at a relocation camp for Japanese-Americans from where they went by train to El Paso and then into Mexico. They reached a rain-soaked Santa Rosa, after being welcomed and greeted by the inhabitants of León.[105]

Soon after their arrival, there developed a critical problem of employment. Many of the refugees had been working and earning a living in Bombay and Iran. At Santa Rosa only a few could be employed in the maintenance of the refugee camp and in the nearby fields. No other form of employment was to be found, and moreover it was not permitted. American Ambassador Messersmith was accused by his Polish and British colleagues of interpreting the clause of non-competition with Mexicans even more rigidly than was meant. Barred from other cities in Mexico, the bulk of the Polish refugees were forced to live entirely on the administered support, and remained essentially idle.[106]

While the first group was being settled, another assembled in Karachi and Bombay, consisting of 726 persons including 387 orphans aged four to fifteen who were accompanied by their teachers and guardians. They too were transported on board the SS Hermitage to the West Coast and arrived in Santa Rosa on November 2, 1943. In January 1944, only ten thousand Polish civilians remained in Iran but the British authorities still pressed for their evacuation. The Mexican government agreed to take 487 of them. The Polish authorities were still slow to request transportation formally from

the Navy Department through the State Department, and so the third group never sailed.[107] Mexico committed itself to providing for the relocation of 1,910 Poles, of whom 1,432 actually arrived. Of this number, there were only 31 Jews.

The Rescue of Jews

In October 1941 the Nazi authorities prohibited further migration of Jews from Germany, Austria, and Western Europe. Mexico maintained consulates in these countries until August 4, 1941, and thereafter operated out of unoccupied France, North Africa, and Lisbon. Tens of thousands of Jewish refugees were concentrated in these countries, desperately seeking opportunities to escape the increasing persecution (under Pétain and Laval) or anticipated persecution should the Germans conquer Portugal.

The President's office received appeals from refugees in Poland, France, Spain, and Portugal seeking to migrate. The Polish minister in February 1941 sought admission for seventeen members of two Jewish families, one in Brussels and the other in Lisbon. The representative of anti-Nazi Austrians in Mexico in January 1942 applied for entry permits for eighty-five Jews and non-Jews to migrate from Lisbon. The applications were referred to the Minister of the Interior, Miguel Alemán and were turned down. A query sent to Mexico's minister in Vichy in July 1941 asking whether a group of forty Sephardic Jews with adequate financial means would be accepted, was also referred to Alemán and evidently got a negative reply. Entry permits were obviously not issued to non-Spaniards on a regular basis.[108]

Consuls needed the prior approval of the Minister of the Interior in

order to issue visas. The urgent need to escape from the Germans and their cohorts, nonetheless, impelled the refugees to find alternative ways of entering Mexico: some clearly illegal, including the forging of passports and visas by unauthorized consular officers, such as the case detected in Casablanca, where an officer was selling those documents to Czech Jews.[109] Others means were more in accordance with the Mexican system.

Impelled by consideration for the persecuted, or by sheer greed, the consuls in Vichy did issue visas, before and after permission was granted by the Department of Immigration. The plight of the refugees provided a thriving business for those who had the authority, the application forms, and the stamps. US intelligence intercepted many cables from France, Portugal and even Jerusalem sent to New York and Mexico regarding agents who contacts in Mexico City and were arranging permission with the relevant officials.[110] In December 1940 the HICEM office in Lisbon was offered the services of such an agent in Mexico City who undertook to get a large number of legal entry permits. The holders would pretend to be Christians or farmers with a Jewish organization which had agreed to take them. The fee was $300, but was later reduced to $200 per person. Because of the complications involved in such a deal, it was not seriously followed through.[111]

Later, in May 1942, it was believed that the Jewish Labor Committee of New York had contacts who could provide genuine visas for $250. In September 1943 the JDC was approached by agents of a Mexican doctor who claimed to be a close friend of Avila Camacho, offering to secure 500 permits from the President in exchange for a women's hospital for Mexico City. The money would be given by the Jewish community in Mexico City which was thought to be wealthy enough to afford it. The proposal was politely

rejected.[112]

This connection with entry permits, found in Jewish records, was of course not restricted to Jewish refugees, though they were the main ones involved. The American Security Service saw this as a threat to the hemisphere and sought to crush it. They were not always successful and entry permits obtained through agents were apparently included in monthly reports to the President from the Consular Department of the Foreign Ministry. Permits issued to nationals of Central and Western Europe (excluding Britain) between January 1941 and the end of the war in 1945 totalled 2,200 while another 1,400 were granted to East European nationals. How many of these people actually arrived in Mexico and how many were Jews was not very clear from the report.[113]

Until Mexico entered the war Portuguese ships continued to call on Veracruz and Tampico with larger groups of visa holders. Later on, immigrants could come only individually in transit through the United States. The Comité Central in Mexico City continued to obtain landing for those who came by boat. A noted case was in December 1941 when the SS Serpa Pinto arrived with 192 refugees. One hundred seven of them, Jews and non-Jews, did not have proper documents, and it was not before members of the Comité met with the President's personal assistant that they were allowed in. By the end of February most of them were registered as political refugees and started to earn a living. Two more vessels, the Nyassa in March and the Sao Tomé in April together brought about 260 visa holders. Most of them were looked after by the Comité Central and with proper legal status they found work.[114] After the declaration of war on May 30, 1942, only one more group was registered with 138 persons who arrived in

October that same year. From 1943 to the end of the war, only a small group of 31 Polish Jews went to the camp at Santa Rosa with other Poles and a few others--seventy-two altogether. This was all the Comité reported for 1943 to the end of the war.[115]

Jewish community activity in Mexico was supported financially by the JDC and the HIAS (acting also on behalf of the JCA). These together gave $10,000 towards the legalization and support of refugees who arrived in 1942. From 1940, with one representative in Mexico, the World Jewish Congress, a financially weak organization essentially geared toward political work, became another international Jewish connection for the Comité. Because of the disunity between the JDC and the HICEM one the one hand, and the WJC on the other, the Comité Central had the task of coordinating efforts in Mexico in search of greater rescue opportunities.

In October 1942, with the first concrete reports on the extermination of Jews, the WJC devised a program of rescue for Jews in southern France. All governments in the Western Hemisphere were to be asked to take several thousand or at least a few hundred until the end of the war. The Comité lobbied with Mexico to accept 500 of the refugees but, as a deposit was required prior to any such agreement and the JWC lacked sufficient money, assistance had to be sought from the JDC. By the time the Comité's request could reach the JDC and an arrangement worked out, France was invaded, thus destroying the already slim chances for an effective operation.[116]

General Sikorski in the meantime signed the agreement with Mexico for temporary shelter for his nationals, and there seemed to be some possibility that Poles in Spain and Portugal could be included. The Comité explored

this possibility but also came up with another rescue project which was approved by the Minister of the Interior. His request of January 28, 1943, asking the Foreign Minister to instruct the relevant Mexican consuls, referred to the admission into Mexico of "one hundred children whose fathers and mothers were forced laborers in French concentration camps".[116] The terms would be that the WJC should bear the cost of transporting the children to Mexico and maintaining them during the war. The WJC lacked funds as well as an agency in Spain and Portugal, the only countries from which Jewish refugee children could be taken. The JDC, which was asked to supply children and money, was also engaged in a similar effort to take children to the United States and became quite reluctant to be part of a project initiated by a rival agency without prior consultation. Its argument was that it was not certain how feasible the project was. It was to be nearly six months before the situation was straightened out, by which time the concessionary Mexican resolution was approaching its expiry in July 1943. It was also quite evident that of the refugees who managed to cross the Pyrenees, only fourteen may have qualified, at least partially, for temporary asylum in Mexico. The few who were there preferred to go instead to Palestine, a scheme then being worked on cooperatively by the Zionist Organization, the JDC and HICEM.[118]

Mexico's reported offer to receive twenty thousand Poles and even more Spaniards prompted the HIAS in May 1943 to seek a similar favor for the Jews. The main idea was that six or seven thousand Jews had already crossed the Spanish border and many more could be allowed to do so if Spain and Portugal got the assurance that they would be taken promptly away to another country. A delegation from HIAS met with Mexico's Minister in Washington to

ask Mexico to take five thousand Jews. He proposed to collaborate with the WJC which had similar objectives. The request was referred to Mexico City and an envoy was sent in July to follow up the request, only to find that it was turned down. Yet, the Foreign Ministry encouraged the envoy to submit another request, this time reducing the number to one thousand permits. That was followed by another one to the President from the Comité, but all those efforts were in vain.[119]

Disillusioned, the Comité reverted to its previous contacts at the Polish mission in Mexico City. The first group of 706 Poles had by then arrived and settled in the Santa Rosa camp and the Comité tried to persuade the Polish mission to extend the concessions it got from the Mexican government to include refugees in Portugal. In September, it reported to a skeptical JDC that an agreement was reached in principle to include 160 families. The JDC doubted that so many Polish Jews would agree to exchange their comfortable though temporary asylum in Portugal for a refugee camp such as Santa Rosa. Those doubts were substantiated when work effectively started at the end of 1943. No Polish Jews arrived before the war in Europe had ended.[120]

Despite the demonstrated failure to contribute significantly to the refugees' plight through temporary protection, a new effort was launched after Roosevelt established the War Refugee Board. After the failure of the Free Port Scheme which brought less than a thousand refugees to an abandoned army camp in Oswego, New York, a similar proposal was put to the Mexico by Jacob Landau, Director of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and by the Comité Central, and was favorably considered by the Minister of the Interior, with the support of Vicente Toledano and Alejandro Carrillo,

editor of the labor movement paper "El Popular". The statement issued on August 1, 1944, specified that asylum was being granted only for the duration of the war, and primarily meant for women and children for whom a special colony would be established. The cost of this settlement would be paid by the relief organizations. Jacob Landau and Morris Waldman, Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee, were in Mexico and met with President Camacho. US Ambassador Messersmith lauded the effort of Foreign Minister Ezequiel Padilla, on behalf of the War Refugee Board. But, in light of the lack of transport to bridge the wide gap between the so-called asylum and the dying Jews, this could be no more than a belated goodwill gesture.[121]

A final and more successful, albeit costly, request to the Mexican government on behalf of the Jews in Europe soon followed. It related to the rescue of Hungarian Jews who in the summer and fall of 1944 were being murdered at a rate unprecedented even in other countries where Nazis held power. Keen on maintaining at least some recognition from the few neutral countries, the frail pro-Nazi government in Hungary agreed to extend their protection to Jews who could prove existing or prospective connections in a foreign country, including belligerents whose interests the neutrals were protecting.[122]

With support from Lombardo Toledano and Carrillo, Jacob Landau (with the eventual participation of the Comité Central) got a tentative agreement from the Minister of the Interior to issue four hundred visas to Jews in Budapest. Moses Leavitt, executive secretary of the JDC, was called from New York to accompany Landau and Waldman to explain the rescue project to President Avila Camacho: the Mexican consul in Bern would get from Sally

Mayer, JDC's representative in Switzerland, a list of names for whom visas would be prepared and issued via the Swedish consul in Budapest. The President approved the arrangement and on August 22, 1944, the Ministry of the Interior issued the order granting the prospective refugees the status of war refugees for one year. Though not explicit, it was well understood that there would be no actual migration to Mexico.[123] Waldman then learned that the JDC had promised to pay $200 per visa via Landau. Actual payments of $75,000 were made: two thirds reportedly allocated for helping to modernize El Popular, the proletarian paper owned by Carrillo and Toledano, with the remaining $25,000 for the establishment of a pro-democratic news agency. Waldman still had his doubts about the real objective behind those funds.[124]

A month later when approached by the Inter-Governmental Committee about its promise to rescue the Hungarian Jews, Mexico replied that it had already given its contribution in the form of the four hundred visas which had been granted "exclusively for the purpose of removing this group from our enemies' reach and helping them settle where they could live in peace".[125] These were indications of definite limits to Mexico's generosity even in the face of grave danger, although no actual immigration was involved.

E. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The controversial issue of immigration into Mexico focussed on three primary ethnic groups, comprising essentially urban immigrants: the Chinese, the Jews, and the Spaniards. But just how significant was the actual size of each of these groups?

First, we consider the Chinese who, according to the national census of 1910, numbered 13,118 in Mexico. A registration of immigrants and emigrants between 1911 and 1918 indicated that there was a net inflow of 19,732. Closer examination of the nationalities which comprised this surprisingly large number of foreigners arriving during turbulent times showed that 61.8 percent of them were Chinese. Not only is this alleged influx of 12,000 new Chinese immigrants not consistent with the data from the census, but it also blatantly contradicts the fact that the Chinese already established in Mexico were having a very difficult time, as we saw. These figures therefore cannot be accepted. Neither can we simply discard them, because if we are to assume that considerable Chinese immigration did take place during those years as well as the 1920's, and that as a result the number of Chinese increased to 14,813 according to the 1921 census and to 15,976 in 1930, then the reliability of the population census in Mexico must be seriously challenged. The information extracted from them could still, however, be indicative of the trend. The figure of 6,661 in the 1940 census could hence be regarded as a reflection of the severe persecution they faced, and that their arrival in Mexico came to a halt.[126]

The numerical impact of the organized and officially-sponsored influx of the Spanish republican refugees could have been more reliable. Figures given varied from 30,000 to 40,000. The doubts surrounding the official

figures from the Dirección General de Estadística arose from inconsistent counts as well as from the fact that Spaniards arrived not only in groups, but also individually. Yet ironically, they arrived at a time when documents were closely scrutinized and formed the basis of the legal status of each foreigner. As evidence regarding the Jewish immigrants shows, the Departmento de Población kept a vigilant eye, and a greedy hand too on even small groups of immigrants. This, combined with the fact that Spaniards arrived in Mexico at only a few points of entry (chiefly Veracruz), would tend to restore a measure of reliability to the official data.[127] To further support the view, Cárdenas, in a retrospective summary of his presidency a year after it ended, described the difficulties in implementing large-scale immigration. He added that those problems were brought on by the war which "...allowed no more than ten thousand to arrive in Mexico". Cárdenas had no reason to understate the extent of one of his greatest successes in international politics and national leadership. The Spaniards had even less cause to evade registration. We are therefore inclined to take his statement as a basisc of result obtained during the Cárdenas years. Félix Fulgencio Palavicinni of the Ministry of the Interior, who helped administer the FARE, wrote in 1945 that the number could have been "more than 15,000". The combined difficulties of transportation and migration during the war years would make us more readily accept the more modest albeit still remarkable figures.[128]

It is difficult to establish accurate figures for the wide range of nationalities which included Jewish immigrants and visa holders. In the years after World War I, they may have comprised a considerable portion of the general rubric 'Other Europeans', who totalled 7,637 according to

immigration statistics for 1919 to 1924. In later years, following the restrictions on immigration imposed in the United States, the number of Jewish immigrants increased significantly. But when the Nazi era began, even though very few German refugees went to Mexico, others from Eastern Europe and the Near East continued to drift into the country in smaller numbers. According to the 1940 census 14,067 persons declared themselves Jewish, but another study concluded that a more reliable count would have been 18,299, including those who arrived during the years of persecution.[129]

Refugee agencies, of course, dealt only with those who turned to them for help, and their data would have been understandably incomplete. Lacking solid figures, contemporary activists had to rely on estimates. The highest, of 1,200, was given by HIAS agent Isaac Asofsky in December 1941. If we add to this figure another 650 referred to in correspondence from the Comité Central, we arrive at a total of 1,850 refugees for the entire Nazi period.[129] As we have seen, between the arrival of the Poles in Santa Rosa with only thirty-one Jews among them and the end of the war, no other significant group of refugees went to Mexico. With the offer in August 1944 of four hundred visas to help Hungarian Jews escape from Budapest, Mexico may have directly contributed to the survival of some 2,250 Jews during the Holocaust, to which could be added a supposedly small number of undetected ordinary Jews who arrived between 1933 and 1937.

The reason for this small contribution should first be understood in the context of the relationship between the Mexican people and leadership on the one hand, and the 'undesirable' immigrants on the other, the Chinese and the Jews being the largest part in this category. Hostility toward

them, while cultivated by the urban lower-middle class for alleged reasons, was actually based upon deep-seated racial prejudices. The claims about their non-assimilation were contradicted by the repeated calls for the Chinese to be physically segregated and prevented from marrying Mexicans. That Jews could assimilate, as the German ones demonstrated, and the positive role they played in Mexican industry and business, served little purpose. The rejection was based on racial feelings and concepts.

In his fifth annual address to the nation, Cárdenas declared that: "The doors of Mexico were opened to the republican elements who could not remain in their country without threats on their lives, and furthermore it was a humane contribution to a race similar to ours in spirit and blood who, together with the indians, contributed to the formation of our nationhood. He reiterated this argument in his retrospective Apuntes.[131] National identity, perceived in racial terms, was a barrier to Jewish immigrants. The fact that the Spaniards were not much more successful in agriculture than the Jews and competed even more with urban Mexicans, were indeed disturbing but failed to deter immigration for Spaniards.

Another marked difference between the Jewish and Spanish immigrants was the support the latter received from the government.[132] When the management of the Spanish funds came into question, the Mexican government took charge of it. The Jewish immigrants received support only from Jewish welfare agencies which, while in a position to support a large number of immigrants with grants and loans, did not have the money to establish a large-scale immigrant scheme. This difference, between the abilities of the private and government agencies to look after refugees, was more forcefully demonstrated in the temporary asylum offered to the Poles. Although he was

leading only a government-in-exile, General Sikorski was assisted by the United States and Britain with funds and transportation in the odyssey of his 1,432 nationals across the globe during the war. The availability of funds, British interests, and the assistance of the United States combined to make the Mexicans offer a temporary refuge to the Poles. The Jewish refugees, on the other hand, could not count on getting such help.

Great Britain, though closely monitoring the changing immigration laws, did not intervene in the early 1930's, even when its own Indian and Palestinian subjects were being persecuted. In 1938, before the Jewish refugee problem became grave, Britain's relations with Mexico were strained because of the oil dispute, and did not improve until two years after the war broke out. Again, considering the evacuation of the Poles as in its interest, Britain succeeded in getting Mexico to take them. The US influence in Mexico did not experience that crisis, and the plight of the refugees was a matter the Mexicans could have used for making amends with their "Good Neighbor", had they really cared for the refugees as they claimed.

Not only was Evian a relief for those who feared a forced agreement to take in more refugees, but it also encouraged a withdrawal of the pledges previously made. Ambassador Josephus Daniels, when approached in September 1940 to intervene on behalf of rejected refugees holding Mexican visas, merely complained to the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the irresponsible action of the Mexican consul who issued the visas. No other attempt was mentioned in his memoirs, as he apparently had very little interest in the matter.[133]

While it was feared that the arrival of the Spanish republicans may

have brought many communists to the "backyard of the United States", the German and Austrian refugees were believed to include Nazi agents. Intelligence on the granting of asylum to Franz Werfel and other German intellectuals was very revealing in this regard. It reported efforts to find and prosecute those who were engaged in the illegal arrangements for visas, which often included applications for US transit visas. No indication has been found in the State Department's records that the United States actively intervened on behalf of Jews or others seeking asylum in Mexico. The War Refugee Board which it set up was too belated to affect that imbalance.

This lack of leadership on the part of the democratic powers left the international organizations, which they themselves helped to establish, no influence with the Mexican Government which in fact originally used the Inter-Governmental Committee as an excuse for inaction, and later as a platform for explaining its selective immigration policy. In January 1943, when protests against the murder of Jews in Europe forced Britain and the United States to intervene leading to the Bermuda Conference, they did not ask Mexico for help, as that country had already promised to take in the Poles.

Official attitude notwithstanding, America still made its own impact on the Mexican government. Mexican sensitivity to American public opinion often manifested itself in relation to the Jews. The position of American Jewry as an important segment of liberal America was frequently demonstrated in their internal consultation. Consequently, in spite of his opposition to taking in Jews, García Téllez courteously received representatives of HIAS, the American Jewish Committee, and the JDC, as did his predecessors and

successors. In the long and bitter struggle between General Almazán and Avila Camacho, the former, whose supporters included some noted anti-Semites, attempting to convince American public opinion of his true anti-racist feelings, expelled some of those supporters. Partly because of their close contacts north of the Rio Grande, the Jews in Mexico met no hostility from the authorities.[134]

The German presence and influence in Mexico worked, naturally, in the opposite direction. Adolf Hitler is said to have referred to Mexico during a private conversation, as the easiest target for an eventual German Empire in the Western Hemisphere. Whatever may have been his real designs on Mexico, he certainly would have receive no help from Mexicans: hostility towards Nazi Germany was deeply rooted in the Cárdenas regime. The German ambassador had to make frequent complaints of attacks on his consulates and abuse of the German flag. Anti-Nazi activism involved socialists, communists, and the CTM led by Lombardo Toledano. The government meanwhile maintained strict but cold relations with the Reich. This atmosphere curtailed any direct German interference in Mexico's rescuing its victims.[135]

Covert activities, however, stood a better chance. These were carried out mainly by the German community in Mexico which was consolidated into a well-organized pro-Nazi bloc of newly arrived Volksdeutsche. The German Club, which up to 1940 turned out some 2,000 Hitler-Jugend graduates, and German industrialists and businessmen fed on and spread anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda. Other extensions of the German Embassy were extremist nationalist groups: the Gold Shirts, officially dismantled in 1936 but continuing under a different name, the Vanguardia Nacionalista; and the

Party of Public Salvation, of Mexican origin and membership. They were heavily dependent on the Third Reich representatives. Their aggressively anti-Semitic posters on the streets of Mexico City and other towns were, in the words of one reporter, "exact reproductions of the posters which covered walls in German cities between 1928 and 1933". Their occasional physical attacks on Jews encouraged many Mexicans to be hostile to Jews. Apart from these small loyalist groups, the Germans also infiltrated the Sinarquista movement, and senior officers in the Mexican Army and government were also influenced. Anti-Jew animosity spread and became accepted, calling for Jews to leave. The cost of these and other Nazi activities in Mexico was apparently borne by the German community which became extremely powerful in some states.[136]

Nazi expansionism in Mexico was of grave concern to powerful interests who were well aware of the role of anti-Semitism in such a process. Jewish self-defense was supported by Mexican and CIM interests, as were the Spanish republicans in their struggle against Falange supporters. But the Falange was outlawed and hunted down early 1939, while the German influence was not really wiped out until Mexico entered the war in mid-1942. Also, in contrast to the Spaniards' case, anti-Nazism did not necessarily imply animosity towards anti-Semites, and was always opposed to Jewish movement into Mexico. This struggle was to be taken on by the Jews themselves through their local community, with the help of international Jewish organizations.

The Mexican Jewish community had to be "rediscovered" in 1938 by HIAS, HICEM, and the JDC, after it had been studied in 1921 by the B'nai Brith, the Industrial Removal Office, and the Jewish Colonization Association. It was surveyed in 1925 on behalf of the Emergency Committee in 1931 by the

American Jewish Committee, and the B'nai Brith rendered protection. Routine relations were established with these only late in the summer of that year and kept to a low profile. HIAS and HICEM contributed $250 monthly, while the JDC contributed a meager $12,750 from 1938 to 1942. Until November 1944, when support was withdrawn, contributions may have amounted to $20,000, apart from the $75,000 which had been spent for the four hundred visas obtained from Lombardo Toledano and Carrillo.

JDC's contributions were, of course, proportional to the number of immigrants who actually arrived in Mexico. The allocation of $200,000 in the fall of 1939 for the settlement scheme in Tabasco which would accommodate 1,500 families showed that the JDC and its related Agro-Joint were willing to give more money if necessary. The extent of the Holocaust was however not fully appreciated, and the JDC seemed to have given much greater priority to Mexico than it could really afford. Moreover, if we compare the $698,760 that the JDC had spent on a much larger number of refugees in France in 1939 with its installment of $200,000 for the settlement of 1,500 families, then we could only conclude that this was an indication of the maximum contribution the JDC could make.

The JDC's pledges, however, never came into question since the Mexican government's offer to accept Jews on its own conditions in any case entailed less support than Jews contributed towards the immigrants. The conditions applied by the Mexicans thus reduced organized Jewish activity to the day-to-day struggle to getting permission for small groups to come in, and to securing legal status for them.

With their contacts and knowledge of the Mexican system, the local Jewish agencies not only managed to look after those who sought their help,

but also got temporary asylum for one hundred children and later for 160 Jewish families from Poland. These achievements in 1943 as well as the designation of a "Free Port" in August 1944 were unfortunately of little use as they did not address the situation prevailing in Europe. As a contribution to the survival of the Jews, these were indications of definite limits to the ability of Jewish organizations to accomplish rescue, as well as a belated gesture of Mexico's goodwill towards Jewish victims of Nazism.

The activity of the Jewish community in Mexico contrasted sharply with the attitude of the established Spanish community toward the Spanish refugees, and although we did not examine the matter in detail, it would still be fair to say that the latter community, comprised mainly of supporters the old regime in Spain, apparently contributed very little to assist their newly arrived compatriots whose interests were left entirely up to the semi-official agencies SERE and JARE, with some help from the local branch of the Federación de Organismos de Ayuda a los Republicanos Españoles (Federation of Spanish Republican Relief Agencies). This organization of supporters of the Spanish republic could, within the context here, be regarded as the Spanish counterpart of the international Jewish agencies. Its activities in Mexico in relation to immigration were overshadowed by the greater recognition that the government accorded the official agencies.

Finally, we must point to the fact that the Allies, the Germans, official and unofficial agencies as well as the local communities were all primary forces at play in the administration of immigration and rescue through Mexico. At the heart of that process, however, were the Mexican people and government along with the policies the latter enforced.

Mass immigration was never contemplated after the Revolution had put

an end to the Porfirio Díaz regime. As the Governments after the Revolution were more concerned with the repatriation of Mexicans abroad, they implemented tighter immigration laws. In fact, entry was reserved only for the rich, and there was always the requirement of proof of a specified amount of money.

Ironically, although by its stated policies a non-immigrant country, Mexico incorporated into its Constitution provisions for an immigrant group, political refugees. Despite the express application to all politically and racially persecuted people, only the Spanish republicans, whose protector Mexico was to become, received any generous treatment. When the necessarily temporary status of these people was at variance with the situation confronting them, their status was changed to that of permanent immigrants.

It would appear that the extent of the Spanish influx was more a function of the war than a direct result of the restrictive and selective policies that the Minister of the Interior and the Avila Camacho regime were intent on putting in place. Notwithstanding those policies, they were spurred to offer basic asylum to Poles as well, and as elaborated in the foregoing analysis, with much restraint to Jewish refugees who arrived in small groups. These were clear indications that Mexico's declared empathy for the persecuted had its obvious limits.

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NOTES

1. On the "Porfiriato" see a recent concise description by Robert Ryal Miller, Mexico: A History, Norman, 1985, pp. 257-282.

2. Data on Mexico: Walter F. Willcox, (ed), International Migrations, Vol. I, Statistics, New York, 1969, first edition, New York, pp. 501-505, based on: Estadística de inmigración formada por la Dirección General de Estadística a cargo del Dr. Antonio Penafiel, no.1, Año de 1909 Mexico 1910, pp. 308-319. No figures for re-emigration in 1909-1910 are given. Moisés González Navarro, Población y Sociedad en México (1900-1970), Mexico 1974 Vol. II, p. 14. Data for Argentina: in Juan Alsina, La inmigración en el primer siglo de la independencia, Buenos Aires, 1910, p.25, and Congreso Nacional, Cámara de Diputados, Diario de sesiones, July 1938, p. 619, elaborated in Haim Avni, Argentina y la historia de la inmigración Judía, 1810-1950, Jerusalem, Buenos Aires, 1983, Apendice 1, Table no.2, p. 539.

3. Charles Cumberland, "The Sonora Chinese and the Mexican Revolution", Hispanic-American Historical Review, Vol. 40, 1960, p. 191.

4. González Navarro, op. cit. Vol. II, p.16.

5. See Summary and Conclusions, fn. 116.

6. Cumberland, op. cit., offers a detailed analysis of the Chinese suffering; Willcox, op. cit., based on Boletín del Dept., etc., 1924.

7. AGN Gob., 2.360 (4-2)-1, letter of Sub Comité Anti-Chino de San Luis Potosí to President Calles, Sept. 10, 1926; see also in same many other similar documents from several states.

8. AGN Gob., 2.360 (6) 8027, Memorandum of the Chinese Legation, July 15, 1926 and annexes.

9. Cumberland, op. cit., p. 199.

10. JCA/LON Material for the Council meeting of Sept. 24, 1921, "Report of Henry P. Goulston Relative to Jewish immigration to Mexico" presented to IRO and Letter to JCA, Sep. 9, 1921 with annexes; The B'nai Brith representatives on this commission were Rabbi Martin Zielenko and Archibald A. Marx of New Orleans; YNY HH Mexico, file 1, report by Judge Leon Sanders, A. Herman and Louis S. Gottlieb, to HIAS, New York, Aug. 8, 1921.

11. Anita Brenner's papers, JTA report of Aug. 10 and signed statement of Oct. 28. (Her daughter Susannah Glusker kindly donated photocopies of this material to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). For a fuller discussion of Calles declaration see Corrine Krause, "Mexico--Another Promised Land?", American Jewish Historical Quarterly, Vol. LXI, #4, pp. 338-342.

12. YNY, HH, Mexico File 1, Charles E. Asnis, "Survey and Report on Mexico, Its Present State and its Availability for Jewish Immigration" submitted to the Emergency Committee for Jewish Refugees", Sept. 29, 1925 Ms. pp. 172 Maurice Hexter, "The Jews in Mexico", Jewish Social Service Quarterly no.2, March-June 1926, pp. 188-196, 274-286.

13. Anita Brenner, "Mexico--Another Promised Land", in Menorah Journal, Vol.XIV, no. 4, April, 1928, pp. 330-341.

14. AGN Gob., 2.360 (29), letters of Oct. 23, 1930; China's Legation protest of Nov. 24, 1930.

15. AJC RG 1-29 MDW, telegraphic reports by Siegfried Lipschitz of May 29, June 1, 2, 3 and letter from Waldman to Adler, July 16, 1931; Anita Brenner's papers, leaflet by a Senator and nine Congress Deputies representing nine districts of Mexico City in support of the closing of business on June 1.

16. Cumberland, Op. cit. p. 191. AGN Gob., 2.360 (22) 6, letter of the Cámara Israelita de Industria y Comercio to the Minister of the Interior, June 26, 1931.

17. Marcos Desiderio, Mexicanos: !No expulseis a los Judíos! Mexico, April 1931; AGN, Gob. 2.360. (21)-2, letter from Mazatlán to the President, July 18, 1931 and the cable from the Governor of Sinaloa dated 27.[7.31/1]. A very large group of citizens from the town of Ahome, Sinaloa sent a petition to the President on July 30, 1931, calling for the expulsion of the Chinese. [3.71/2]

18. AGN Gob., 2.360, letters by Amador E. Velez of Aug. 29 and Sept. 2, 1931; BPRO FO 371/15846 report, Nov. 1, 1932 and notes, on repatriation of Palestinians and Indians from Sonora rather than protesting to Calles' son, the governor.

19. González Navarro, op. cit., Vol. II pp. 40-44; AGN Gob. 2.360 (29) 34, Acuerdo...of Dec. 6, 1929, Foreign Ministry's letter of Jan. 9, 1930 and final order to the Dept. of Migration, Feb. 10. The regulations permitted the entry of spouses, children, parents and young sisters and brothers of previously naturalized immigrants.

20. Secretaría de Gobierno, Reglamento de la Ley de Migración, 13.6.1932, Articles 1, 8, Mexico 1932; Diario Oficial, 17.2.1934.

21. Guillermo Palacios, "Mexico en los Años Treinta" in América Latina en los Años Treinta, Mexico 1977, pp. 515-537. Josephus Daniels Shirt Sleeve Diplomat, Chapel Hill, 1947, pp. 37-65 and William Cameron Townsend, Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexican Democrat, International Friendship, Waxlaw (North Carolina) 1979 pp. 95-118, 132-136 offer eyewitness accounts of the political developments.

22. AGN Gob. 2.360 (29) 112, Circulars no. 250, October 17, 1933 and no. 157 of April 27, 1934.

23. AGN Gob. 2.360 (29) 48, Petition of Jan. 1, 1934, signed by José Fernandes Bucardo and hundreds of his colleagues; Memoranda by José Angel Espinosa of Sep. 29, 1933, Feb. 16, 1934.

24. El Mundo de México, 19.4. 1934, p. 1.

25. Anita Brenner's Papers, "Report and Analysis of Activities of So-Called Nationalist Organizations in Mexico", July 17, 1934; La Prensa, August 23-26, 1937. Krum Heller, a Mexican journalist in Berlin, was a "personal representative" to the Reich.

26. AGN Gob. 2.360 (21) 7, Foreign Ministry Memo of Feb. 24, 1933 quoting China's complaint about mass persecutions and the deportation of hundreds of Chinese inhabitants from Sinaloa.

27. AGN Gob. 2.360 (29) 48, Memorandum of May 22, 1933 quoting the Foreign Ministery's note which included the Ambassador's message of April 21, 1934.

28. Anita Brenner's Papers, ibid; La Prensa Aug. 23-26, 1937; AGN PLC, 541.1/41, protests by various labor organizations in Nov. 1935 and congratulations in April 1936; BPRO FO/371, 19792 Report to Mr. Eden, March 19, 1936.

29. AGN PLC, 546.1/G, Espinoza to the President, April 3, 1935 with memorandum and statistics.

30. AGN Gob. 2.360(29), and PLC, 546.2/48, various documents.

31. Ignacio Marvan, "El frente popular en México durante el Cardenismo", in Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Vol. 23 no. 89, July-Sep. 1977, pp. 14-16, quotation from the resolutions of the Congress as brought by this author.

32. AGN Gob. 2.360 (29)8154, study by Gilberto Loyo on behalf of the Instituto de Estudios Sociales, Políticos y Económicos of the PRN, presented to the Minister of the Interior, March 8, 1935.

33. González Navarro, Vol 11 pp. 48-51, quoting Constitución Política Mexicana con Reformas y Adiciones y Leyes, Mexico, 1945, pp. 423-460.

34. AGN Gob. 2.360(29)8103, letter from Pedro Molino Espinoza to 'Comité Pro Raza, 25.9.36; PLC, 546.2/48, several letters of Aug. 1937.

35. AGN PLC, 521/4, Gran Logia Valle de Mexico to Cárdenas, Oct. 13, 1937.

36. AGN Gob. 2.360(29)23630, Note from the Foreign Minister, Nov. 19, 1937 and annexes; similar questions came from Buenos Aires, ibid. note from Mexican Embassy, Nov. 30 1937, transmitting question of Boleslao Lewin.

37. Informations blatter in Antrage des Zentralausschusses der Deutschen Juden fur Hilfe and Aufbau, no. 7/8, Berlin, Nov. 15, 1935, p. 108; Haim Avni, op.cit.

38. YNY,HH, Mexico file 3, HICEM, Paris to HIAS N.Y., Dec. 9, 1937.

39. AGN PLC, 546.6/77, Personal note from Silvestre Guerrero to Cárdenas, Dec. 8, 1936 regarding Trotsky; Vera Foulkes, "Los Niños de Morelia" y la Escuela "España-Mexico", Mexico D.F. 1953.

40. Burt M.McConnell, Mexico at the Bar of Public Opinion, a Survey of Editorial Opinion Newspapers of the Western Hemisphere, New York 1939; Josephus Daniels, pp. 217-263.

41. Friedrich Katz, "Mexiko und der Anschluss Osterreichs", Zeitschrift fur Latinamerika, Vol. 10-11, 1976, pp.113-120.

42. Quoted in YNY,HH, Mexico file 3, Refuge Committee to HICEM, June 5, 1938.

43. For Mexico's unique relationship with the Spanish Republic, see: T.G Powell, Mexico and the Spanish Civil War, Albuquerque, 1981, also a less detailed work by the same author in: Mark Falcoff, and Frederick Pike (ed.), The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39, American Hemisphere Perspectives, Lincoln and London 1982, pp. 49-99; An Anthology of documents was published by: José Antonio Matesanz, México y la República Española, 1931-1977 Mexico 1978.

44. Patricia Fagen, Exiles and Citizens, Spanish Republicans in Mexico, Austin and London, 1973, pp. 28-30.

45. MAE III-1246-9 (18), Note by Ignácio García Téllez, the Minister of the Interior to Eduardo Hay Foreign Minister, June 20, 1938.

46. AGN PLC 546.6/148, 546.6/178, 546.6/149, letters of April 12, 14 and 29, 1940.

47. Haim Avni, Latin America and the Jewish Refugees, op.cit.; quotation from AHRE III 1246-9 (1 era p.) instructions cabled to Villa Michel, June 21, 1938.

48. AGN PLC, 549.2/18, memorandum to the President, January 3, 1939; Der Weg, Dec. 20, 1938, p. 1, his inaugural address to the Population Congress.

49. YNY HH, Mexico 3, Israelitische Kultusgemeinde, Wien, Auswanderungsabteilun July 6, 1938, HICEM, July 15, 1938.

50. AHRE III -134-20 memorandum dated Sept. 2, 1935, on consultation at the Foreign Office. AGN PLC, 546.6/16 cable of July 27, 1937 and the Foreign Minister's reply of July 29.

51. YNY HH Mexico file 3, letters by HICEM, Sep. 15, 1938 and by the

Comité October 9 and 10, 1938.

52. Der Weg, July 14, 1938 AGN PLC, 546.6/16, the confederation's appeal of August 13, 1938; The doctors of Puebla to Cárdenas, Sep. 13, 1938.

53. Der Weg, July 14, 19, 23, 26, 1938.

54. YNY HH Mexico file 3, The Comité to HIAS, Sept. 14, 1938.

55. Der Weg, October 11, 1938.

56. Der Weg, October 22, 1938; AGN PLC, 546.6/16 Letters from Jewish Peoples' Committee, New York, and the Ministry's reply; JDC Mexico file 143, confidential letter of Nov. 9, 1938 written probably by Rosenberg to editor of Der Weg.

57. Ibid, ibid.

58. Der Weg, Nov. 17, 1938, p. 1; Nov. 24, 1938, p.1, 4.

59. Der Weg, Dec.8, 10, 13, 17, 20, 22, 1938, p. 1 and article by M. Rosenberg, Dec. 24, 1938. p. 4.

60. ACCI no. 1, Nov. 9, 1938, p. 1; no. 4, Nov. 22, p. 2b; no. 6, Nov. 29, 1938, p. 3; Der Weg, Nov. 12, 1938; YNY HH, Mexico File 3, HIAS to HICEM, Nov. 17, 1938; JDC Mexico file 143, letter from B'nai Brith, Mexico, Nov. 18, 1938.

61. Diário Oficial, Nov. 1, 1938 (quoted from José Antonio Matesanz México y la República Española, Antología de documentos. 1931-1977, Mexico 1978, p. 52-53; AGN PLC, 549.2/18, Memorandum to the President, Jan. 3, 1939; AHRE note to Foreign Minister, March 23, 1939.

62. JDC Mexico file 143, Report on the Jewish Community in Mexico, by Bernhard Kahn, Sep. 5, 1939, p. 7; A report on Jewish Colonization, Jan. 22, 1941; Der Weg, Mar, 25, 1939, p. 1; July 22, 1939, p.7; ACCI Jan. 17, 1939, no. 13, p. 13, May 16, 1939, no. 31, p. 24.

63. JDC Mexico file 143, note by B. Kahn, April 10, 1940. Edwin Nathan, from the American Consulate in Monterey, secured the help of the community at Laredo and later from the JDC for this group. See these letters by Albert Lieberman, Philadelphia, to Schwartz, April, 1940.

64. BPRO, FO 371/24086, Foreign Office Minutes, (Mr. Makins), Jan. 11, 1939, the plan of "A Prominent American Journalist"; ibid, suggestion of F. Nutter Cox transmitted Nov. 24, 1939; AGN PLC, 546.6/16 project, submitted by Adolphe de Castro, Los Angeles, July 29, 1939 and comments by García Téllez, Aug. 9, 1939; ibid, letter from Samuel Goldstein "an ordinary young Jewish-American", July 10, 1939.

65. AGN PLC, 549.2/18, Memorandum from Ramón Beteta to Cárdenas, January 3, 1939; 546 6/16 Beteta reports of meetings in Washington and

Swarthmore, Pa., June 15, 18, 1939; Aydelotte to Cárdenas, Sep. 12, 1939. JDC Mexico file 3, Memo. from B. Khan, April 10, 1940.

66. AGN PLC 546.6/16, President's resolution to the Minister of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Treasury and Agriculture, Nov. 13, 1939.
67. Ibid, ibid; Hay to Cárdenas, Oct. 27, 1939; Memo by Landa y Pina, Nov. 2, 1939. Tabasco's Governor to Cárdenas, Nov. 17, 1939.

68. El Universal, Nov.15, 30, 1939; Excelsior, gov. 17, 19, Dec. 1, 1939; Ultimas Noticias, Nov. 28, 1939.

69. AGN PLC, 546.2/48, Note by "Liga Nacional" to Cárdenas, Dec. 20, 1938.

70. Jean Meyer, Le Sinarquisme: Un Fascisme Mexicain? 1937 1947, Paris, 1977, pp.44-55, 140-143; also review by Rodrigo Martinez Barcas, Revista Mexicana de Sociología, Vol. 41, July-Sept. 1979, pp. 1092-1095.

71. Hugh Thomas, The Spanish Civil War, New York, 1961, 557-559; AGN 546.6/200 cable from Tejeda, Jan. 7, 1939; Garcia Tellez' (Jan. 17), confirmation of Cárdenas' resolution of Jan. 11; ibid, protests and congratulations; ibid, Siqueiros' interview as head of the Francisco Javier Mina Society of the Mexican ex-volunteers, with Cárdenas, March 27, 1939.

72. Salvador de Madariaga, Spain, London, 1946, pp. 441-3, gives 440.

73. AGN PLC, 546.6/212-14, Cable by Hay to the Ambassador in Washington, Feb. 17, 1939, transcribing Bossols' cable no. 255.

74. Most of the story of the immigration and integration of the Spanish refugees, was recounted by Patricia Fagen in Exiles and Citizens, see pp.33-50; "Sinaia" brought 1599 Spaniards according to the source used by Fagen; 1800 according to Smith, Lois Elwis Smith; and 1,620 according to Boletín al servicio de la emigración españoles, No. 4, Mexico D.F., Sept. 7, 1939, p. 1. This source lists 312 immigrants, which is not listed in the other sources. For a full description of the Sinaia voyage see Concepción Ruiz Fumes and Enriqueta Tunon, Final y Comienzo: El Sinaia (Palabras del Exilio 2) Mexico D.F 1982.

75. AGN PLC, 546-6/212-12, Acuerdo (Agreement) by Cárdenas and the Ministers for the Interior, Agriculture and Treasury, Jan. 2, 1940. JDC Mexico file 143, "A report on Jewish Colonization in Mexico, Jewish Telegraph Agency, Jan. 1941 and B. Kahn's remarks.

77. See detailed description without indication of sources, by Nathan L. Whetten, Rural Mexico, Chicago, Illinois, 1948, pp. 166-168. It is used by Fagen, p. 55. The vast 150,000-hectares property is mentioned though apparently only about 8,00 was realy cultivated; See Carlos Martínez, Crónicas de una Enmigración, Libro Mex. 1959, pp. 61-65 who used for his apologetic short chapter some articles by the Spanish agronomist Adolfo Vázquez Humasque. He mentions only 350 colonists.

78. Fagen, op.cit pp.40-51, The long lastin contribution of the Spanish immigrants, is amply discussed in her other chapters. The need for an apologetic propaganda was felt by the immigrants, See Boletín al servicio de la inmigración Española, no. 1, Aug 15, 1939.

79. BPRO FO371/24523 Reports by Ifor Rees, Feb. 16, 20, 1940. The infighting between the socialist and communist adherents of the last Prime Minister of the Republic Juan Negrin, and those of his exfriend and by then bitter rival, the socialist Idalcio rieto marred the process of the emigration. See G. Powell.

80. AGN PLC, 549.2/20, García Téllez to Cárdenas' secretary, Feb. 22, Apr. 16, 1940.

81. AGN PLC 546.6/77, Asociación Nacionalista to Cárdenas, June 17 about Diego Rivera's statements in Los Angeles, July 26. Letter by judge who investigates the murder, implicating Siqueiros; ibid. Many other protest from pro-communist individuals and organizations.

82. The text of the agreement and President Cárdenas' Sixth Annual Report, Sept. 1, 1940 quoted in José Antonio Matesanz Antología...p.64, 85; Mauricio Fresco, La Emigración Republicana Española; una Victoria de México, Mexico 1950, pp. 40-41. Excelsior, Aug. 30, 1940; and other (including American) periodicals, presented the agreement as refering to 250,000 Spanish refugees in France. It raised vain hopes among the Jews there, see JDC Mex. file 143, memorandum by B. Kahn, Sept. 20, 1940.

83. AGN PLC, 546.6/212-14, Notes by Eduardo Hay to Cárdenas' secretary Oct. 16 and Nov. 9, 1940.

84. El Universal, June 6, 1939, p. 1, Salvador Nove, "Sinaia vs. Sinai" in Hoy, June 17, 1940, reprinted in his La vida en México en el Período Presidencial de Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico 1964, pp. 339-350.

85. El Universal, March 31; Excelsior, Aug. 5, 1940; NARS SD, 81z.55/344, Daniels to Secretary of State, Aug. 6, 1940.

86. AGN PLC 549,Z/18, Draft of a note from Cárdenas, Aug. 7, 1940, to the applicants, NARS SD, 840.48 - Refugees/2253, Intelligence Report quoting the same note from El Nacional, Aug, 15. JDC, Mex. file 143, in Bernard Kahn memorands of Sept. 20, observed that he knew "at least 50% of these, most of whom were already in the U.S." The instigator of the petition was Enrique Guttman, ex-president of the German Cultural League in Mexico who had contacts with Cárdenas. Among the other petitions was one from the American Committee to save Refugees of New York, headed by Walter Rautenstrauch, AGN PLC, Sept. 5, 1940.

87. NARS, SD, 840.48 Refugees 2244, Note of Sept. 6, 1940 and clipping from New York Herald; AGN PLC 549.2/18, Report by cable from Oficina de Población, Veracruz, regarding thirty three persons who were allowed permits to land. The wife of the Marquéz de Casafuerte and her children were Goldshmidt-Rothchilds.

88.JDC Mexican file 143, CCI to JDC, October 23, November 14, 1940.

89. Howard Cline, The United States and Mexico Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1967, pp. 247- 251, 265-277.

90. JDC Mexican file 144, Jacob Landau to JDC, April 23, 1942 and 2 clippings from Ultimas noticias and El Popular (undated).

91. Matesanz, Antología pp. 86-89, 96-97, quoting Diario Oficial of February 8, 1941, pp. 1-3, December 1, 1942, and Los Presidentes Vol. IV, p. 153. The reserved attitude towards the "Brigadiers" was evidenced in April 1942 when eighty of them arrived on board SS Sao Tome and were denied entry. In London a deputation of Members of Parliament required British intervention with Mexican authorities. They were finally admitted since the overloaded ship could not carry them back. BPRO FO 371/32619 note by Markins, April 22, 1942, cable by Baleman, Mexico, April 25, no. 147.

92. AGN PNAC 546.6/5-2, cable by Edward K. Barsky to the President, January 7, 1941 and Foreign Office's reply, January 25, 1941; FOARE of Buenos Aires, May 17, and reply July 5, 1941.

93. Maurício Fresco, La Inmigración Republicana, p. 52, AGN PMAC 546.6/86, list of visas, number 433 to 733 signed by GilbertoBosques, Consul-General, April 30; ibid 546.6/36, monthly reports of visas.

94. Ibid, 575/1, cable by Diego Martínez Barrio, ex-President of the Spanish Republic to the President, Oct. 13, 1941, to prevent extradition of ex-governor Manuel Rodríguez Castellón from Algeirs to Franco-Spain; petition from the Union of Construction Workers, Buenos Aires on behalf of 130,000 Spanish refugees, Oct. 21, 1941; idem from Patronato Pro-Presos de Franco, Mexico City, April 30, 1942. Intervention was promised in all these cases.

95. José Antonio Matesanz, Antología p. 96-97, quoting the decree from Diario Oficial , Dec. 1, 1942; ibid, pp. 106-116 quoting Martinez Barragan (ed.) Comisión Administradora del Fondo de Auxilio a los Republicanos Españoles, Informe de su Gestión Durante el Ano 1943-1944, (Mexico 1944), pp. 5-23; El Nacianal Jan. 6, 1943, "El Fondo de Auxilios a los Republicanos Iberos", first annual report; and NARS SD 840.48 Refugee/4987, U.S. Embassy in Mexico, Jan. 7, 1943, comments on it. Some figures regarding 1943 differ in these two reports. In his brief description, Felix Fulgecio Palavicini, who was the delegate of the Ministry of the Interior on the commision, emphasized the Spanish quarrels and ignored the Mexican perspective of the government's intervention. See his Mexico, Historia de su Evolución Constructiva, Mexico, 1945, Vol. IV, p. 273-275.

96. NARS SD, 840.48 Refugees 34.91, note by Duggam, Dec. 9, 1942; ibid, 4702, E. Barsky to State Department, Oct. 11, 1943; ibid, 4951, SD to Embassy, Mexico, Dec. 30, 1943, refering to three lists which by then had been transmitted.

97. José Antonio Matesanz, Antología, p. 92 quoting Memoria de Gobernación 1942-1943, p. 65, refers to 1105 who arrived by ship in March,

May and October. AGN PMAC 546.6/36 Pablo Campo Ortiz, Dec. 30, 1944, report for 1944.

98. For a detailed discussion of this subject see Haim Avni, "Between Bermuda and Santa Rosa: The Allies and the Rescue of Jews during the Holocuast from a Mexican Perspective", in Contemporary Jewry, Studies in Honour of Moshe Davis, The Institute of Comtemporary Jewry, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1984, pp. 85-114 (Hebrew).

99. Memoría de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Septiembre de 1942--Agosto de 1943, Presentada al H. Congreso de la Union por Lic. Ezequiel Padilla, Mexico 1943, Tomo I, pp. 458-460. Der Weg, Dec. 29, 1942. NARS SD, 840.48, Refugees 3615, Polish governments' note, Feb. 22, 1943.

100. Ibid, ibiden.

101. BPRO FO 371/36674, messages from J.N. Wood, Ministry of War Transportation to George Randall, in charge of Refugee Affairs, Foreign Office, Jan. 15, 1943, Feb. 5, and 17, 1943. This was a striking difference from the basic assumption of the non-existence of available boats to rescue Jews, which was emphazised in the deliberations between Great Britain and the United States at that very same time. These contacts led to the convocation of the Bermuda Conference where the inavailability of boats for rescue was adopted as a formal resolution. George Randall was there and he must have known better.

102. Ibid, Randall to British Minister in Teheran, no. 126, Feb. 9, 1943, reply cable 169, Feb. 14, 1943, FO 371/36675, cable by Halifax no. 1975, Apr. 27, 1943; cable by Randall, May 12, 1943, FO 371/42780, cable Bullard no. 54, Feb. 13, 1944.

103. BPRO U.S. Government Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1943, vol. I, General, Washington 1963 (FRUS) reports by Ambassador Messersmith of March and April 1943, pp. 265-266; 285-287; 291-292; BPRO FO 371/36675 report by Bateman, no. 60 of Apr. 26, 1943.

104. Oral History Dept., Institute of Contemporary Jewry, testimony by Maria Karlov OHD 1 (156). NARS SD 840.48 Refugees 3417, report by American Consul Ciudad Juárez, June 29, 1943.

105. Ibid, 3537, Messersmith to Hull, July 7 and 23, 1943; BPRO FO 371/ 36675, cable by Bateman no. 168, Aug. 4, 1943.

106. Ibid, cable by Bateman no. 247, Nov. 3, 1943; OHD 2(156), testimony by Benjamin Koslovski, pp. 8-14; BPRO FO 371/42780, cable by Halifax, no. 2035, April 23, 1944.

107. AHRE III 2413-15, Marchlewski to Padilla, Feb. 4, 1941, and Aleman's answer, Feb. 19, 1941; II/553.1 (46.72), Ernesto Hidalgo to Aleman quoting the cable from Vichy, July 7, 1941. AGN PMAC 546.6/119, Silvio de Holmsburg to the President, Jan. 31, 1941 and Alemán's reply Feb. 17, 1942. As for individual requests, see ibid. 546.6/29, 30, 32, 98, 157 and many

others.

108. NARS SD, 812.111/1077 note from the Office of Strategic Service, Dec. 2, 1942.

109. Ibid, 812.111/818, U.S. Consul, Pinkerton, Jerusalem to State Department, Aug. 8, 1941 transmitting a British intelligence report; 2.111/883 intercepted cable from Frederic' Mees, Apr. 26, 1942; 812.111/855-6 cables from Pau, France.

110. YNY HH Mexico file 6, 00045 Comité Central to HICEM, Feb. 8, 1941 and JDC/Mexico file 143 Bernhard Kahn to Alberto Torrones Benítez, May 23, 1941, both regarding proposals by one José Pérez Gómez. After he apparenly could not meet the requirements for legality which the Comité Central demanded for his offer to HICEM--he approached JDC with the more complicated and more legal combination.

111. JDC Mexico file 144, Henrietta Buchman to United Jewish Refugee War Relief Agencies, Montreal, Apr. 22, 1942; Robert Pilpel, Memorandum for the Files Emigration to Mexico, Sep. 15, 1943.

112. AGN PMAC, 546.6/36 reports covering Jan. 1941 to May 1945, with the exception of April and May 1941, May 1942, and May--Dec. 1943. Data in Western Europe includes Germany, Austria, Belgium, France and Holland. These were 772 in 1941, 462 in 1942, 99 in Jan. to Apr. 1943, 302 in 1944 and 386 in Jan. to May 1945. Data referring to Eastern Europe include Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Russia. They were 463 in 1941, 231 in 1942, 95 in Jan. to Apr. 1943, 265 in 1944 and 205 in Jan. to May 1945. In addition 74 entry permits were granted to stateless persons from 1941 to 1945.

113. JDC Mexico file 144, Isaac L. Asofsky, "Report on arrival of the Serpa Pinto", Dec. 1941; CCI to JDC, Feb. May 28, 1942, financial report according to which 253 individuals registered for support. YNY HH Mexico file 7, CCI to HICEM report for January-June 1942, indicates the arrival of the three steamers, with 441 persons of whom 204 registered with the CCI for help.

114. Ibid. CCI to JDC, Feb. 21, 1944, financial report for Oct. 1, 1942-Dec. 24, 1943, the first fifteen months of its legal incorporation, (having acted from Nov. 11, 1938 until then as a unregistered organization).

115. JDC Mexico file 144, CCI to Bernhard Kahn, Oct. 9, 1942; Hyman to CCI. Nov. 6, 1942.

116. Ibid. Fernando Casas Aleman, Undersecretary of the Interior to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan. 28, 1943. Vicente Lombardo Toledano evidently influenced this resolution and was sent a copy.

117. Ibid. Leavitt to CCI, Mar. 12, 1943, CCI to JDC June 7, 1943; Ibid, a cable from Leavitt to Herbert Katzki, Lisbon, June 11, 1943 read "we asked for official confirmation that the visas were authorized but no reply

from Mexico to date"; Katzki to Leavitt, Aug. 6, 1943.

118. YNY HH Mexico file 8, report on Mexico by Solomon Dingol, Vice-President, HIAS, Aug. 18, 1943; cable from CCI to Avila Camacho signed Leon Behar and Tevia Maizel.

119. JDC Mexico file 144, conversation with M. Wolfowitz of the CCI, Sept. 17, 1943.

120. AJA, Morris D. Waldman (MDW) papers, testimony signed July 29, 1947, pp. 1-5, and photo of Landau, Avila Camacho and Waldman; AJC RG1 Exo 29, Latin America 1944, text of Mexican announcement, and Messersmith to Padilla, August 14, 1944, quoting WRB's greetings. for the "Free Ports", see Arthur D. Morse, While Six Million Die, pp. 340-342.

121. On Spain's action in Hungary see Haim Avni, Spain the Jews and Franco, pp. 168-177.

122. JDC Mexico file 144, Leavitt, Landau, Waldman to Avila Camacho, August 9, 1944; Under-Secretary of Interior, Fernando Casas Alemán to Foreign Minister, August 22, 1944.

123. AJA MDW papers, attestation by Waldman, signed July 29, 1947, pp.6-23 and by Elena Vásquez Gómez of Apr. 10, 1949.

124. AHRE III-1247 p. 2 Ambasador Rosenzweig Díaz in London to Foreign Office, Sept. 21, 1944; reply, Sept. 28, 1944.

125. Data on Chinese Immigration see Walter F. Willcox, Op. Cit., pp. 501-505 based on Estadística de Inmigración Formada por la Dirreción General de Estadística, no. 1, Año 1909, Mexico, 1910, pp. 308-319, and Boletín del Departamento de la Estadística Nacional, Sept. and Nov. 1924, Mexico 1924. Census data according to Moises González Navarro, Op.Cit. Vol.II Table 32, p. 58.

126. See Patricia Fagen, p. 38, who, following Smith, p. 305, provides figures from the Dirección General de Estadística and points to their reliability. They sum up for 1939-1942 to 12, 125. See Jacques Verant, p. 662, who, apparently based on Mauricio Fresco, (1950), p. 53, gives 28,000; but Fresco mentions explicitly eleven years of Spanish immigration and not just 1939-1945. This might be also the source of confusion for T.G. Powell, (in Falcoff and Pike, eds., op. cit. p. 84), who mentions 30,000; and José Antonio Matesanz, "De Cárdenas a López Portillo, Mexico ante la República Española, 1936-1977", Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporanea, Vol. 8, Mexico, 1980, p. 188, who mentions 30,000--40,000.

127. Lázaro Cárdenas, Obras I, Apuntes, 1913/1940 y 1941/1956, Mexico, UNAM, 1972-1973, p. 8, as quoted by José Antonio Martesanz, Antología, p. 66. Felix F. Palavicini, Vol. IV, p. 273.

128. Willcox, Op.Cit., Tables IV, V based on Boletin del Dept., etc., 1924. Tobias Maizel, "Judíos en Mexico", in: Sourasky Leon, Historia de la

Comunidad Israelita de México, 1917-1942, Mexico 1945, p. 274.

129. JDC Mex. File 144, Isaac L. Asofsky report on the arrival of SS Serpa Pinto, Dec. 1941. The report of the Comité Central to HIAS for Jan.-June 1942 mentioned three boats with 441 "ordinary" passengers, 204 of whom were registered for help, YNY HH Mexico file 7. In its report of Feb. 21, 1944, the CCI gave 210, (138 plus 72) registered refugees. We should regard 650 as a maximum, since Asofsky's figure may have included some of the 441. Compare: AJC RG1-Exo29, MDW Latin America 1942 Table "Central and South America at a Glance as of September 1942" gives the number of refugees in Mexico by Aug. 1942 as 1,000. 500 of whom were registered with the relief Committee.

130. José Antonio Metesanz, Antología,...pp. 62, 66, quoting from Los Presidentes de México ante la Nacio,n: Informes, Manifestos y Documentos de 1821 a 1966, Editado por la XLVI Legislation de la Cámara de Diputados, Mexico, 1966, Vol. IV p. 112 and from Obras Apuntes II, p. 8.

131. The Juan Negrin created SERE claimed to have administered eight to nine million pesos, before its funds were exhausted; the value of the treasures brought on the Vita and held by JARE and Indalecio Prieto's supporters remains unclear, but the total sum of nearly 39 million pesos (or 8 million dollars) at their disposal was referred to in "El Fondo de Auxilios a Republicanos Iberos" in El Nacional, Jan. 6, 1943.

132. Josephus Daniels, pp. 334-337. In Feb. 1939, approached to meet with Cárdenas to seek temporary asylum for holders of US visas until their quota arrived, he referred the request to "Taylors Committee", the IGC, ibid, p.336. See JDC file 143 report of Feb. 2, 1940, which reflects almost verbatin Daniels, memoirs.

133. BPRO FO 71/24196, British Consulate-General to Viscount Halifax, July 26, 1940, confidential report p. 31, AHRE III 248(43) 2436 Memorandum, Sept. 2, 1935, regarding Jewish boycott on German products.

134. Frye Alton, Op.Cit. 174-175; AGN Gob. 2.360 (29) 131, The Foreign Ministry to the Ministry of the Interior, Oct. 28, 1935; 2.367 (43) 17070, Hay to García Téllez, Mar. 31, 1936; ibid 28705, Oct. 30, 1937.

135. AGN PLC 704.1/124-1, "Informe confidencial A-3" sent by Eduardo Villaseñor, Under-Secretary of the Treasury to Cárdenas, Oct. 13, 1939. BPRO FO 371/24196, "Nazism in Germany", Copy of a confidential report sent by British Consulate General, Mexico City to Viscount Halifax, July 26, 1940.

136. Yehuda Bauer, American Jewry, Op. Cit. p.159.