

March 27, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

In re: Enemy aliens (men, women and children) to be brought from South America

On Tuesday, March 24, you directed me to ascertain as definitely as possible from the State Department the facts with respect to the proposal to bring Axis alien enemies from South America, men, women and children, concerning which Mr. Long wrote to you on March 12, to which letter you replied on March 19 asking for additional information.

The facts are these.

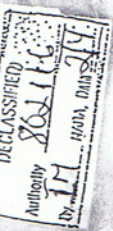
They have arranged for two vessels which will pick up the aliens from the west coast of South America, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia. One vessel will arrive in the United States about April 18 or 20. It may be called the "non-official vessel". It will have 700 males, no women or children. All will be non-official, dangerous Axis aliens. They do not know how many of them will be Germans and how many will be Italians. They claim there will be no Japanese.

As to this vessel, it is expected that all of these aliens will be repatriated. The State Department contends that it will require from two to eight weeks to do so. They claim that they have made arrangements for the vessel which will carry these people from the United States to Europe and return with Americans to be repatriated, and that this vessel will make regular trips.

The guards on this vessel will be supplied by the Army, but they request this Service to provide for them here and hold them in our custody until they are repatriated.

As to this group, we can take care of them at Kenedy, Texas.

The other vessel may be called the "official vessel". It will arrive in this country about April 27 to April 30. It will have on board two groups of Axis aliens, one a group of officials and the other a group of non-officials.



There will be 250 officials, consisting of men, women and children. They will be mostly German and Italian diplomats and their families, with a few Japanese. The State Department does not yet have the figures as to how they are divided by nationalities. It is the intention of the State Department to transport this group to the Greenbrier Hotel, with the exception of the Japanese who will be sent to the Homestead Hotel.

They will want us to furnish guards on the train from the port of debarkation to the hotels, but other than that they ask nothing of our Service with respect to this group.

The other group on board this "official vessel" will consist of 250 non-official Axis aliens, men, women and children. It is the plan of the State Department to hold them in this country for from two to eight weeks until they can be repatriated. They ask this Service to take them into our custody until this can be done.

We have no present facilities to take care of them and the State Department insists that they be kept together in family groups. The suggestion was made to the State Department that they house these family groups in a hotel under arrangements similar to those now provided for the diplomats at White Sulphur and Hot Springs, but Mr. Long contends that the State Department has no authority over persons in this country except diplomats. It is difficult to see how we have any more authority in this respect than the State Department has.

Inasmuch as the State Department does not desire to have military guards on this vessel, they have asked us to supply a detail of ten men to act as guards over the non-officials on the vessel, requesting armed and uniformed Border Patrolmen for the purpose.

To summarize the above, the State Department wants us to furnish ten guards on one vessel, furnish guards on the train which will take the officials to the hotels and take into custody at the port of debarkation 700 males and 250 men, women, and children, a total of 950 enemy aliens, and hold them in our custody until they can be repatriated.

I am not attempting in this memorandum to discuss the question of policy or the legal angles, which have already received your consideration.

As to the expense involved, we have no appropriation to cover this, but the State Department is willing to cooperate with us in obtaining an allotment from the President's Emergency Fund.



In accordance with your instructions today, I will clear
this with Mr. Rowe.

Lemuel B. Schofield
Special Assistant to the Attorney General

LBS/rdm

