FOLDER - National Origins Plan; Legislation
Dear Mr. Mohler,

I am very much obliged for your letter of the 3 March regarding the postponement of the National Origins Bill for one year. We had official information from the Imperial Authorities on the same day that your letter arrived and, along with it, the reply to an urgent request we had made (through the proper channels) for the grant of any unexpended balance of the British 1926-27 Quota (to be used in April) in the sense that all the available balance had been allocated.

Our only hope now rests with Mr. Washington, the American Consul General in London.

I believe I had written you to the effect that it was reported, in the English Press, that there would, in respect of the 1927-28 Quota, be a review of the district allocations, and that the Glasgow district would get a considerable increase. In the light of this information we have asked (through the Imperial Authorities) that Mr. Washington might be moved, in any readjustment of the British Quota for 1927-28, to allot to Malta a number of units greater than the peppercorn 200 we are now getting. What the result will be I cannot say.

We can only hope! But now the idea occurs to me that it is just possible that you may know Mr. Washington personally and, if this is the case, knowing the position of Malta so intimately as you do, and without any semblance of prompting from this end, which would spoil the whole move, and Mr. Washington being the sole and absolute distributing authority in England, you might, perhaps, see your way to put the position before him in a way which no official despatch or representation would adequately interpret.

Your personal (and spontaneous) endeavour, from the humanitarian aspect, would synchronise with the demarches we are officially making and what has failed in six years might, under God, succeed in one. Am I over-bold in putting forward this proposition?

Yours in all sincerity,

Bruce M. Mohler Esquire,
Director Bureau of Immigration Superintendent of Emigration,
National Catholic Welfare Conference.
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Yours in all sincerity,

Bruce M. Mohler Esqre.,
Director Bureau of Immigration Superintendent of Emigration
National Catholic Welfare Conference
National Headquarters
1312 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington D.C. U. S. A.
Miss Mary Kennedy,
736 West 181st Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Miss Kennedy:

After much unintentional delay for which I am duly sorry, I am returning herewith under registered mail your report on "Who Are Undesirable Aliens" having enjoyed exceedingly the close attention which I was able to give to it and to the articles in the Literary Digest and the Survey (Dec. 16, 1923). I am also writing to Father Edward R. Moore. Many thanks for your kindness.

In my letter to Fr. Moore I explained that I had always felt that Jennings in his article was endeavoring to refute what Laughlin had attempted to prove as regards the undesirability of the certain alien groups. This of course is seemingly at variance with your own opinion. Whoever of us is right would largely determine how much Jennings should be blamed for his statements and the statistics which he employed in supporting them. No doubt Fr. Moore will show you my letter so I will not go into great length here.

If you are correct in the assumption that Jennings was serious and that he was supporting the contention previously advanced by Laughlin, then he deserved nothing short of widespread publicity of the facts as you present them. As I explained to Fr. Moore, I would be interested in knowing from Jennings himself as to what his real attitude was.

In the end we decided here not to make any formal presentations to Congress. Senator Rye was supplied with a few facts, but it did not seem to me that those opposed to National Origins made the best of their opportunities. Of course Senator Reed had a strong following. These were of the type who responded to influence rather than to reason. With the wholehearted backing of the so-called patriotic societies, they could very well sit pat and follow the advice of their leader. This they seem to have done very well indeed.

It was fine to hear from you again. Please realize that my tardy letter and return of your report do not in the least denote any less enthusiasm. On the other hand it was the opposite that prevails since it was my special interest in your presentation which caused me to delay until I could find time to cover the matter carefully.

Grateful for your kindness and with sincere good wishes, I remain,

Cordially yours,

BRUCE M. MOHLER, Director,
N.C.W.C. Bureau of Immigration.
Digest taken from Report on "Who Are Undesirable Aliens"

Mary A. Kennedy - Executive Secretary, Catholic Immigrant Auxiliary, New York City.

Takes up Literary Digest, February 23, 1924 unsigned article which in introduction tells of R. E. Laughlin's report as a "racial analysis of the inmates of institutions for the care of defectives." Also E. S. Jennings' analysis in the Survey of Laughlin's figures. Quotes Laughlin's main purpose as:

"to gauge the relative soundness and stability of the different racial groups in the United States, which gauge in turn would constitute a measure of their relative long-time value to the nation especially when viewed in the light of the inborn quality of future generations."

And conclusion:

"The recent immigrants as a whole, present a higher percentage of inborn socially inadequate qualities than do the older stocks."

Notes that this article quotes from Survey report of Jennings and also his statement that if we are required to draw conclusions from Laughlin - least desirable immigrants come from Ireland, Balkans and Russia in order; most desirable from Austria-Hungary (including Czecho-Slovakia), Germany and Great Britain in order.

Notes that graphs and tables of Survey report are copied in Literary Digest article. That one set, "Human Weakening in the Quotes" is particularly arresting. Study of it leads to conclusion Irish prominently are face of the devilish; that column for "depredatory" among Irish immigrants was limited to depth of the chart - that it should have "no one inch higher."

Digest article does not define the listed social handicaps leading to belief that designation is commonly accepted one that "inadequacy" groups are made up of those so overcome by poverty, shiftlessness, or other social handicaps that they would be cared for privately or by public subsidy. Gives reason for thought by most readers that answer to "is "The Irish."

Miss Kennedy articulates Digest as making no attempt to check Jennings article. Suggests study of Jennings article necessary before deciding if Digest was justified in quoting freely from Survey article December 1, 1922 "Undesirable Aliens."

Survey Article. Jennings (Biologist-Chair of Zoology, Johns Hopkins University, states that Laughlin has made extensive investigation "on degeneracy and social inadequacy in relation to immigration; also his intention of examining Laughlin's conclusions that recent immigrants as a whole present a higher percentage of inborn socially inadequate qualities than older stocks.

That Laughlin examined 445 of existing 567 State or Federal custodial institutions with 210,855 inmates - insane - criminal - feebleminded - dependent - tubercular - epileptic - deaf - blind and deformed. If National groups furnished inmates with a particular defect in some proportion as it furnished inhabitants (1910 census) it is said to have fulfilled its quota 100% and likewise over or under. Quota fulfillment indicated how defects prevailed amongst racial strains.
quote fulfillsments shown by two separate analyses:

(a) Nativity (b) Nationality or Country of Birth (67 separate countries and

groups of countries).

Miss Kennedy states that:

"The graphs show for each separate inadequacy, and for all types of social
inadequacy combined, the relative social inadequacy of the several nativity

groups and immigrant races in the United States."

Miss Kennedy explains and includes the delinquency and blindness graphs (copies
from Laughlin report) as two of a group of 10, the two being printed in the body of
the report (Hearings before House Committee, 67th Congress, Third Session) and there-
fore more liable to receive attention than the tables and notes regarding standards
found in the Appendix.

Miss Kennedy quotes Jennings criticisms on two main points:

1. That insomuch as the four categories, insanity, crime, pauperism, tuber-
culosis in which immigrants make worse showing may be influenced by either inheritance
or environment and some immigrants unquestionably have more nerve wracking experiences
here and therefore more unfavorable environment, we may not conclude that their defects
are due entirely to poor inheritance.

2. Since only statistics studied are from government institutions and insomuch
as foreign born probably through poverty, lack of ties uniting them to the social
fabric, have recourse to these more often than do members of established native
families, "it cannot be held established that the prevalence of defects is so much
greater in the foreign born as the face of the present statistics seems to show."

Miss Kennedy states that Jennings' conclusion therefore that in direct com-
parison it does not appear that recent immigrants are inferior to natives in their
inherited qualities; that Jennings to classify his statement criticisms: Laughlin's
findings re the negro in that he is far below his quota in most classes of defects;
feeblesmindedness 10% of his allowance; insanity 45%; tuberculosis 40% (in spite
of his known susceptibility); epilepsy 12%, etc. Miss Kennedy states that this
cannot represent the actual incidence; that obviously the negro does not readily
find his way into public institutions (except prisons).

Miss Kennedy suggests that Jennings would be expected to ignore Laughlin data as
unsuitable from which to prepare statistical tables and graphs showing relative
degeneracy but that he nevertheless uses two large charts on which are plotted the
quota fulfillments of certain groups.

Miss Kennedy notes that if the Laughlin data as Jennings states have no true
value as a criterion of racial degeneracy, why does he use these charts in his own
article, since they are certain to be looked upon as "graphic representations of
the facts presented in the article?" Consists that an illustration should not be
contrary to the written content which it is supposed to make clear. Remarks that
visual memory is strong and will linger. Suggests that therefore Jennings cannot
be credited with scientific accuracy if he discounts the value of statistical data
and then uses them for the upbuilding of his table to illustrate his Survey article.

Miss Kennedy quotes Jennings "The Desirability Sweepstakes" table which reverses
Laughlin's figures in showing defects: Northern and Western Europe 4 firsts, 3 seconds, 2 th
(Southern and Eastern " 5 " 5 " 6}
Miss Kennedy states that "so with the data which he himself discredit, Dr. Jennings has been able to satisfy himself on the first point in his argument" that Ireland takes first place with most defectives; that in his second point he states that when the parents of the American born defectives came to this country the dominant immigrant streams were Irish and German and concludes that "all lines of evidence thus converge upon Ireland as the chief source of defectives." She notes that this strange conclusion cannot be scientifically upheld and that in reaching it he used in "a queer and twisted argument" the Lauglin data which he had previously declared worthless, also that "even granting for a moment that Jennings does not, that there is some value in this Lauglin data, we must take grave exception to Jennings's use of it."

1. he does not in his tables list all the defects for which Lauglin gave statistics omitting blindness, deafness, deformity.

2. he neglects to definite just what Lauglin meant by dependency.

Miss Kennedy notes that Lauglin dependents were classified as those maintained in institutions for (1) Orphans - 51, (2) aged and infirm - 4 (2) Soldiers and sailors - 60; that the 63 institutions considered are part of a group of 66 listed in the "Statistical Directory of State Institutions for the Defective, Dependent and Delinquent Classes, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census 1919." She includes list of these 66 and states that these 66 were included by Lauglin or Jennings against foreign groups having three worst records for dependency. This leaves homes for the aged and infirm homes for soldiers and sailors. Of these 37 of 66 reported. Even counting all four homes for aged and infirm, at least 53 of the institutions for adult dependents were homes for soldiers and sailors or their widows. One can assume that the adult dependents listed by Lauglin were on the whole extremely aged veterans and widows. Miss Kennedy suggests that criticisms of Jennings is justified when he says "Ireland is overwhelmingly prominent, with a full quota fulfillment (63%) more than six times her allowance, followed afar off by Great Britain, (31%) with the Balkans as distant third (18%)."

Miss Kennedy notes:

"If the definition of 'dependency' be 'an aged soldier or sailor in a home' - then Ireland is truly prominent and the column for dependency (Ireland) with the Literary Digest said should really extend one inch higher - and which the Survey Article (larger in scale) explained should extend one and three quarter inch above border, really are quite fair and may be taken as honorable shafts raised in memory of those who in their glorious service for their country, are cared for not by the municipalities or private organizations, but in soldiers' and sailors' homes supported at least in part by the States and Nation."

Miss Kennedy criticizes Jennings in following Lauglin example in giving equal value (7) (scoring) "to each handicap or infirmity or crime." She states that "To Jennings and to Lauglin, each old soldier or sailor in a home helps swell his racial total for degeneracy in exactly the same degree as does a desperate criminal, and the man - a former soldier, who after an upright and hardworking life as a citizen has had the misfortune to outlive his family, is in his extreme old age, classed as a 'defective.'"

We are therefore justified in gravely criticizing Dr. R. S. Jennings for his "Biologist's Examination of the Evidence Before Congress." He proved that Lauglin's statistics could not be accepted as truly showing the true incidence of defects, thus he calmly proceeded to use these very statistics as bases for his graphs and tables and to prove his own thesis about the country to which should be awarded the prize as 'the chief source of defectives.' He ignored some of the findings of Lauglin, altogether
neglected to give the Survey readers a description of the very special kind of 'dependency' under consideration, and, following Laughlin's lead, he secured his totals by assuming that the felon, the old soldiers, the orphan and the worker disabled in industry, are equal determinants of racial defectiveness."

"We are even more justified in criticizing the Literary Digest which reaches 'the man in the street and on the farm' for so carelessly doing its bit toward the stirring up of racial animosities by practically copying and then spreading broadcast an arraignment (even a true one) of a race which many of the readers despise. We are justified in not only criticizing it, but also in calling it severely to account for the publication of such a criticism without every precaution having been taken to check up on the accuracy of the statements contained therein, so that facts which should have redounded to the everlasting credit of the Irish are cited as proof of 'degeneracy.'"
June 20, 1939.

Rev. Edward H. Moore, Ph.D.,
Director, Division of Social Action,
The Catholic Charities,
477 Madison Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Father Moore:

I feel myself in absolute disgrace for having delayed so long in writing you about Miss Kennedy’s report on the Literary Digest Article “Who Are Undesirable Aliens”. The only satisfaction which remains, - if it can be termed such after all this seemingly unjustified neglect, - is the fact that I gave very careful attention to the report shortly after it arrived. Fortunately, I took rather profuse notes so this reply to you will be complete even though tardy. I’ve been extremely busy and have permitted the day to day matters to take precedence over others.

My reaction throughout in reading the report was that it was unusually well prepared, nicely in order with the points falling in good sequence, and that it constituted a splendid analysis of the Laughlin figures. But the surprising thing to me was that whereas I had originally formed the opinion that Jennings’ whole purpose was to ridicule the Laughlin report, Miss Kennedy took him seriously on the basis that he too was intending to show the inferiority of certain racial stocks largely along the same lines as did Laughlin. There never was any doubt in my mind as to the latter’s purpose, but I still feel that Jennings did not subscribe to these same views but rather was opposed to them and that he actually took Laughlin’s figures to prove the opposite of what Laughlin had claimed for them.

If Jennings’ purpose was otherwise then he surely was most unscientific in his attempt to produce a correct record of his own. His recognition of the limitations of Laughlin’s interpretation seems to justify the opinion that he was not intending to compile a formula of desirability, but that his object was merely to demonstrate the Laughlin figures as being too inaccurate. In fact he plainly points out the need of a supplementary study of the valuable contributions of the same groups, and that the “present report” deals solely from the standpoint of relative defectiveness. I can well see how criticism can be applied to Jennings’ technique in presentation, but as regards purpose I still feel that he was opposed to the Laughlin conclusions.

I am wondering if Miss Kennedy had direct word from Jennings as to whether or not he subscribed even in a general way to Laughlin’s treatise.

I remember that when reading the article “Undesirable Aliens” (quoted in the Survey (Dec. 15, 1932), in spite of my own Irish ancestry I experienced a pleasurable sensation over Jennings’ presentation following as it did the Laughlin report which in spite of its glaring inaccuracies was being considered in all seriousness by the House Immigration Committee.
Certain main points in Jennings' Survey article appear as definite refutations:

That Laughlin's figures do not necessarily prove anything since no one knows whether an equal number of average Americans put through the process of immigration under the same conditions would not show an equal number of breakdowns.

That statistics from expensive private institutions might in all probability show a reversal in the proportions of native-born and foreign-born as compared with governmental institutions.

That inferior environment and more frequent recourse to public institutions because of poverty, etc., may account for a part or all of the inferiority in the immigrants' record.

That until an investigation is carried out to determine this point it stands in the way of Laughlin's conclusion that "the recent immigrants as a whole present a higher percentage of inborn socially inadequate qualities than the older stocks".

Granting that some defective stocks (whether in greater or less proportion than among natives) do come in, Jennings points out difficulty of discovering which group or groups are responsible. He says that real evidence of defective inheritance comes in the first native-born generation and that Laughlin does not give us data as to specific parentage (by nationality) of the defectives in these.

Jennings therefore concludes that Laughlin's tables do not confirm the impression carried by his thesis that Europe falls into two contrasted regions, - one desirable and the other undesirable, - and quotes Laughlin's own figures as demonstrating that "the country with the worst record falls in the north and west division; that with the best record in the south and east" although "for total defectives the north and west has a small but distinct advantage". Also that: "If we are required (underlining is mine) to draw conclusions respecting these main sources of immigrants it is clear that these data present immigration as least desirable from Ireland, the Balkans and Russia, in that order; most desirable from Austria-Hungary (including the present Czechoslovakia and parts of Jugo-Slavia and Poland), Germany and Great Britain, in that order". And in the last paragraph he says: "The general upshot is of a character to discourage attempts to regulate immigration on the basis of race and nationality so far as Europeans are concerned", and states that Laughlin recommends, not racial discrimination but a more careful examination of the prospective immigrant in the country of origin.

Wonder if you have seen the "Homicide Record for 1938" by Frederick L. Hoffman, Consulting Statistician of the Prudential Insurance Company? It is quite interesting and constitutes a fine argument in favor of the foreign-born population.

I will appreciate your opinion as to my interpretation of the Jennings intent which is the only point in which I differ from Miss Kennedy whose conclusions in paragraph 4, page 12, of her report are a pleasing comment in favor of Americans of Irish ancestry.
I am returning Miss Kennedy's report to her today registered to the address 736 West 161st Street.

Depending upon your generosity to overlook this long delayed expression from me, I remain, with cordial good wishes,

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

BRUCE N. MOHLER, Director,
N.C.W.C. Bureau of Immigration.
Mr. Bruce M. Mohler, Director
Bureau of Immigration - NCWC
1312 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Mohler:

The other day I had a conference with Reverend Dr. Moore, Director of the Division of Social Action of the Catholic Charities. You will be pleased to know that he decided upon our sending letters to several senators and congressmen, urging a repeal or amendment of Public Resolution 1018.

On this occasion he mentioned that Miss Kennedy was still interested in immigration and naturalization matters. Some time ago an article appeared dealing with the question "Who are Desirable Citizens". Miss Kennedy then made an investigation along these lines, and as the question seemed to be alive again, she forwarded her paper to you. I wonder if you have received it and did you find it helpful?

Our office has missed your visits since Miss Kennedy's resignation. It would be a pleasure to have you call on us when you are again in New York.

Very sincerely yours,

Irene Slachta, Ph.D., Director
Catholic Immigrant Aid
Mr. Bruce Mohler,
Director of Immigration,
National Catholic Welfare Conference,
1812 Massachusetts Avenue,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Mohler:

This is frankly curiosity: I am wondering if you found Miss Kennedy’s comments on "Who are Undesirable Aliens", interesting?

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

(Rev.) Edward Roberts Moore
Director, Division of Social Action.

ERM/C
Dear Mr. Mohler,

It was not until

last night that I was able to complete

my report and send it to you.

Hence the delay.

Reading it over today, several

years after it was written, I am

struck by the gaps in my written

argument. The whole was so

clear to me that I've been thinking

it would be just as evident to a

reader. I see now that I uncon-

sciously omitted from the

writing, which I gave to
was impossible to secure a copy of the
before the House Committee,
we had been sent out and
such demand that the
was exhausted. I had
at the Public library reg-
istration of the Hearing before
committee contained the
and answers actual-
d. Nowhere throughout
repeated procedure
effort made to show

Father More and Father Keegan in
conversation. They too, probably
did not see that to a person
totally unfamiliar with the
matter some further notes should
be supplied.

To begin with—The original
articles in the Literary Digest
and in the Survey should have
been appended so that a reader
might see the graphs where
the facts were so "dependent" that
their column had to be shortened
so that it might fit on the page.

Also, I should have said
that it was impossible to secure from Washington a copy of the Hearings before the House Committee. All copies had been sent out and were in such demand that the supply was exhausted. I had to consult the Public Library.

At this report of the Hearings before the Committee contained the questions and answers actually employed. Nowhere throughout the whole reported procedure was any effort made to show Father Moore and Father conversation. They did not see that it was totally unfamiliar in matters some further be supplied.

To begin with articles in the list and in the survey been appended as may be seen the greatest, the guides were so that columns had to be so that it might fit a. Also, I should ha
the specific kind of dependency under discussion. As a matter of fact, if my memory serves me rightly, there was a rather casual statement by someone that it was well known that the Irish were a shiftless lot. It was only in the appendices printed at the newspaper that there was any hint which might lead one to question the kind of dependency which had been talked about. And how many
Of the readers who "ate up" the conversational report of the hearings would trouble to seek a definition of terms in a very dry appendix. Even the late Congressman Vauls, when speaking at an immigration luncheon in Denver quoted as gospel the Caustral data. He later refused even to discuss their possible fallibility. Moreover, unless a person
special institutions upon figures he based his

In reply, Laughlin

has actually been in social

work, he or she would not

have been much better informed

by reading the Appendix. Day

few people would have wondered

as to what were federal and

state institutions for dependents.

In order to satisfy myself

on this last point, I wrote

a letter (which Father K. signed)
to Representative O'Connor asking

him to get in touch with

Laughlin and secure a list

of federal and state institutions for dependents.
of the special institutions upon whose figures he based his findings. In reply, Laughlin stated that all the figures for his report were secured from the "Statistical Directory of State Institutions for the Dependent, Dependent and Delinquent Classes, Dept of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1917". After a study of this book, secured from Laughlin or someone else by Representative O'Connor, S. has actually been work, he or she was have been much by reading the appendix to what were state institutions. In order to settle this last point, a letter (which had to Representative O'Connor) was sent in through Laughlin and received.
made the report. This of course has no direct relation to the National Origins controversy, nevertheless after reading it, you may somewhere sometime, be able to question the basis for some other conclusion being put forth by an eminent statistician, biologist or what have you.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Kennedy.
March 1, 1929.

Rev. Edward Roberts Moore,
Director, Division of Social Action,
Catholic Charities,
477 Madison Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Father Moore:

I am grateful for your kindness in regard to the confidential report of the study made by Miss Kennedy on the National Origins plan.

The report has already arrived with an explanatory note from Miss Kennedy. I am looking forward with much interest to reading it.

Reciprocating the good wishes expressed in your letter,

I am,

Cordially and respectfully yours,

BRUCE H. MOHLER, Director,
N.C.W.C. Bureau of Immigration.
February 28, 1929.

Mr. Bruce Mohler,
Director of Immigration,
National Catholic Welfare Conference,
1512 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Mohler:

Just a line in response to your recent inquiry to say that I have secured the requisite permission to place at your disposal a copy of the study by Miss Kennedy occasioned by the article appearing in "The Literary Digest", entitled "Who are Undesirable Aliens?" A copy is, I believe, already on its way to you.

I believe you will find it very interesting and perhaps helpful. I have no need to mention Miss Kennedy's ability; that is well known. And she devoted a great deal of time and thought to this study.

Regretting that it is so long between our meetings and hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you sometime in the not too distant future, I am

Very cordially yours,

(Rev.) Edward Roberts Moore,
Director, Division of Social Action.
Mr. Bruce M. Mohler, Director
N. C. W. C. Bureau of Immigration
National Catholic Welfare Conference
1312 Massachusetts Avenue
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Mohler:

I have your letter of February 18th regarding the study made by Miss Kennedy on "National Origins".

This study was a confidential one made for His Eminence, Cardinal Hayes. His Eminence is out of town at the present time, but I am quite sure that on his return, I will have no difficulty in securing a copy of this study for you.

With kindest best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours

(Rev.) Edward Roberts Moore
Director, Division of Social Action.
February 16, 1939.

Miss Mary Kennedy,
736 East 181st Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Miss Kennedy:

Your letter of February 14 telling of your studies relative to the National Origins plan has inspired an immediate note to Father Moore with the suggestion that if your study is available and it is not outside the policy of the Charities office I would be pleased to have the opportunity of reading it.

Although the Bishops have gone on record as opposing the National Origins provision no active antagonism has been demonstrated by the N.C.W.C. nor have we been requested to appear against that part of the law. In fact I have rather been surprised that more antagonism has not developed since both political parties had denounced the plan during the fall campaign and a bill had been reported last year by the House Committee to abolish the provision.

I will be deeply grateful to read your report for we can never tell just when we will be called upon to act. Naturally we have some material available but anything in addition will be most welcome and particularly the report to which you referred so much effort.

Thanking you for the reference and trusting that Father Moore will look favorably upon my request letter, I remain, with kind personal good wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

HUGO H. MULLER, Director,
N.C.W.C. Bureau of Immigration.
February 18, 1939.

Rev. Edward R. [Moore, Ph.D.],
Division of Social Action,
Catholic Charities,
477 Madison Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Father Moore:

It seems ages since our paths crossed and I therefore welcome this opportunity to greet you and to express the hope that you are enjoying the usual favorable status of being happily busy.

My letter is occasioned by word from Miss Kennedy about a study which she prepared on the subject of National Origins. Thinking that a copy might be available for me to read on a confidential basis if desired, I decided to write you this inquiry.

While the Bishops’ Administrative Committee went on record against the National Origins provision, no active antagonism has been suggested for the N.W.C. The recent action of the House in voting down the anti bill to postpone for one year brings the matter into rather unusual prominence. Of course positive action by the President will be necessary to make the plan effective. Without a Presidential proclamation the situation would not be changed even though Congress fails to postpone the date of effectiveness. It is generally expected here that the President will not issue a proclamation and that therefore the National Origins provision will not become effective this year.

If Miss Kennedy’s material is available I would greatly appreciate the opportunity of reading it. If it is confidential or your policy does not permit giving it out, then please be frank for I will fully understand.

With every good wish, I am,

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

BRUCE M. MOHLER, Director,
N.W.C. Bureau of Immigration.
736 181st Street
New York, FEB 14 1929

Dear Mother,

I might have known that you had made the Delegation contact. Giving information to you is like carrying Coals to Newcastle.

Now again I may be jumping in where I am not needed—but—

After reading about the Fya Resolution regarding the National Origin Plan, I thought that some hearings may be held and that you may be gathering
When I worked at 470 Madison Avenue, I was there quite an assignment to investigate the truth of an article which dealt with an editorial question. I prepared quite a detailed report which I thought would be useful to you to read. It was submitted to you, I believe.

Although I have a copy of the report, my work was done for the Catholic Charities (for the Women's Auxiliary) and I am

R. E. V. really free to send this copy.

I telephoned to the editor to see if he thought you'd be interested in it, and he said he thought you might be. He asked if you would be interested in it, and I said yes. He asked if you would be interested in it, and I said yes. He asked if you would be interested in it, and I said yes.

So — if you'd like to see me send it on. If you were to write him regularly, we'd be no difficulty about the permission to have me send it on.
Something that I shared was and that once seemed pretty good to me - wrote to Father Moore requesting my Chef d'oeuvre. If you don't want it - why I'll not feel at all put out for I know bow much material you must already have.

Very sincerely yours

Mary Kennedy
Report on "Who Are Undesirable Aliens"

Mary A. Kennedy - Executive Secretary, Catholic Immigrant Auxiliary, New York City.

Takes up Literary Digest, February 23, 1924 unsigned article*which in introduction tells of H. E. Laughlin's report as a "racial analysis of the inmates of institutions for the care of defectives"; also H. S. Jennings' analysis in the Survey of Laughlin's figures. Quotes Laughlin's main purpose as:

"to gage the relative soundness and stability of the different racial groups in the United States, which gage in turn would constitute a measure of their relative longtime value to the nation especially when viewed in the light of the inborn quality of future generations."

and conclusion:

"the recent immigrants as a whole, present a higher percentage of inborn socially inadequate qualities than do the older stocks."

Notes that article quotes from Survey report of Jennings and also his statement that if we are required to draw conclusions from Laughlin - least desirable immigrants come from Ireland, Balkans and Russia in order; most desirable from Austria-Hungary (including Czecho-Slovakia), Germany and Great Britain in order.

Notes that graphs and tables of Survey report are copied in Literary Digest article. That one set, "Human Wreckage in the Quotas" is particularly arresting. Study of it leads to conclusion Irish preeminently are race of the derelict; that column for "dependency" among Irish immigrants was limited to depth of the chart - that it should have run one inch higher.

Digest article does not define the listed social handicaps leading to belief that denotation is commonly accepted one and that "dependency" groups are made up of these so overcome by poverty, shiftlessness, or other social handicaps that they would be cared for privately or by public subsidy. Gives reason for thought by most readers that answer to * is "The Irish".

Miss Kennedy criticises Digest as making no attempt to check Jennings article. Suggests study of Jennings article necessary before deciding if Digest was justified in quoting freely from Survey article December 5, 1923 "Undesirable Aliens".

Survey Article, Jennings (Biologist)-Chair of Zoology, Johns Hopkins University, states that Laughlin has made extensive investigation on degeneracy and social inadequacy in relation to immigration; also his intention of examining Laughlin's conclusions that recent immigrants as a whole present a higher percentage of inborn socially inadequate qualities than older stocks.

That Laughlin examined 445 of existing 667 State or Federal custodial institutions with 210,855 inmates - insane - criminal - feebleminded - dependent - tubercular - epileptic - deaf - blind and deformed. If National group furnished inmates with a particular defect in same proportion as it furnished inhabitants (1910 census) it is said to have fulfilled its quota 100% and likewise over or under. Quote fulfillment indicated how defects prevailed amongst racial strains.
Quota fulfillments shown by two separate analyses:

(a) Nativity  (b) Nationality or Country of Birth (67 separate countries and groups of countries).

Miss Kennedy states that:

"The graphs show for each separate inadequacy, and for all types of social inadequacy combined, the relative social inadequacy of the several nativity groups and immigrant races in the United States."

Miss Kennedy explains and includes the delinquency and blindness graphs (copies from Laughlin report) as two of a group of 10, the two being printed in the body of the report (Hearings before House Committee, 67th Congress, Third Session) and therefore more liable to receive attention than the tables and notes regarding standards found in the Appendix.

Miss Kennedy quotes Jennings' criticisms on two main points:

1. That inasmuch as the four categories, insanity, crime, pauperism, tuberculosis in which immigrants make worse showing may be influenced by either inheritance or environment and immigrants unquestionably have more nerve wracking experiences here and therefore more unfavorable environment, we may not conclude that their defects are due entirely to poor inheritance.

2. Since only statistics studied are from government institutions and inasmuch as foreign born probably through poverty, lack of ties uniting them to the social fabric, have recourse to these more often than do members of established native families, "it cannot be held established that the prevalence of defects is so much greater in the foreign born as the face of the present statistics seems to show."

Miss Kennedy states that Jennings' conclusion therefore that in direct comparison it does not appear that recent immigrants are inferior to natives in their inherited qualities; that Jennings to classify his statement criticises Laughlin's findings re the negro in that he is far below his quota in most classes of defects; feeblemindedness 16% of his allowance; insanity 53%; tuberculosis 40% (in spite of his known susceptibility); epilepsy 12%, etc. Miss Kennedy states that this cannot represent the actual incidence; that obviously the negro does not readily find his way into public institutions (except prisons).

Miss Kennedy suggests that Jennings would be expected to ignore Laughlin data as unsuitable from which to prepare statistical tables and graphs showing relative degeneracy but that he nevertheless uses two large charts on which are plotted the quota fulfillments of certain groups.

Miss Kennedy notes that if the Laughlin data as Jennings states have no true value as a criterion of racial degeneracy, why does he use these charts in his own article, since they are certain to be looked upon as "graphic representations of the facts presented in the article?" Comments that an illustration should not be contrary to the written content which it is supposed to make clear. Remarks that visual memory is strong and will linger. Suggests that therefore Jennings cannot be credited with scientific accuracy if he discounts the value of statistical data and then uses them for the upbuilding of his table to illustrate his Survey article.

Miss Kennedy quotes Jennings "The Desirability Sweepstakes" table which reverses Laughlin's figures in showing defects: (Northern and Western Europe 4 firsts, 3 seconds, 2 thirds (Southern and Eastern " 3 3 5 "
Miss Kennedy states that "so with the data which he himself discredits, Dr. Jennings has been able to satisfy himself on the first point in his argument" that Ireland takes first place with most defectives; that in his second point he states that when the parents of the American born defectives came to this country the dominant immigrant streams were Irish and German and concludes that "all lines of evidence thus converge upon Ireland as the chief source of defectives." She notes that this strange conclusion cannot be scientifically upheld and that in reaching it he used in "a queer and twisted argument" the Laughlin data which he had previously declared worthless; also that "even granting for a moment what Jennings does not, that there is some value in this Laughlin data, we must take grave exception to Jennings's use of it."

1. he does not in his tables list all the defects for which Laughlin gave statistics omitting blindness - deafness - deformity.

2. he neglects to define just what Laughlin meant by dependency.

Miss Kennedy notes that Laughlin's dependents were classified as those maintained in institutions for (1) Orphans - 21 (2) aged and infirm - 4 (3) Soldiers and sailors - 60; that the 52 institutions considered are part of a group of 84 listed in the "Statistical Directory of State Institutes for the Defective, Dependent and Delinquent classes, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census 1919." She includes list. She excludes child-caring institutions since none were included by Laughlin or Jennings against foreign groups having three worst records for dependency. This leaves homes for the aged and infirm and homes for soldiers and sailors. Of these 37 of 64 reported. Even counting all four homes for aged and infirm, at least 33 of the institutions for adult dependents were homes for soldiers and sailors or their widows. One can assume that the adult dependents listed by Laughlin were on the whole extremely aged veterans and widows. Miss Kennedy suggests that criticisms of Jennings is justified when he says "Ireland is overwhelmingly preeminent, with a full quota fulfillment (63.4%) more than six times her allowance, followed afar off by Great Britain, (218%) with the Balkans as distant third (121%)."

Miss Kennedy notes:

"If the definition of 'dependency' be 'an aged soldier or sailor in a home' - then Ireland is truly preeminent and the columns for dependency (Ireland) which the Literary Digest said should really extend one inch higher - and which the Survey Article (larger in scale) explained should extend one and three quarter inch above border, really are quite fair and may be taken as honorable shafts raised in memory of those who in their glorious service for their country, are cared for not by the municipalities or private organizations, but in soldiers' and sailors' homes supported at least in part by the States and Nation."

Miss Kennedy criticizes Jennings in followin Laughlin example in giving equal value (?) (scoring) "to each handicap or infirmity or crime". She states that "To Jennings and to Laughlin, each old soldier or sailor in a home helps swell his racial total for degeneracy in exactly the same degree as does a desperate criminal, and the man - a former soldier, who after an upright and hardworking life as a citizen has had the misfortune to outlive his family, is, in his extreme old age, classed as a 'defective.'"

"We are therefore justified in gravely criticizing Dr. E. S. Jennings for his 'Biologist's Examination of the Evidence Before Congress.' He proved that Laughlin's statistics could not be accepted as truly showing the true incidence of defectives, then he calmly proceeded to use these very statistics as bases for his graphs and tables and to prove his own thesis about the country to which should be awarded the prize as 'the chief source of defectives.' He ignored some of the findings of Laughlin, altogether
neglected to give the Survey readers a description of the very special kind of 'dependency' under consideration, and, following Laughlin's lead, he secured his totals by assuming that the felon, the old soldiers, the orphan and the worker disabled in industry, are equal determinants of racial defectiveness."

"We are even more justified in criticizing the Literary Digest which reaches 'the man in the street and on the farm' for so carelessly doing its bit toward the stirring up of racial animosities by practically copying and then spreading broadcast an arraignment (even a true one) of a race which many of its readers despise. We are justified in not only criticizing it, but also in calling it severely to account for the publication of such a criticism without every precaution having been taken to check up on the accuracy of the statements contained therein, so that facts which should have redounded to the everlasting credit of the Irish are cited as proof of 'degeneracy!"