

**Guide to the National Catholic Welfare Conference,
Department of Immigration, New York Office
and the Catholic Committee for Refugees Records
CMS.024**

Finding aid prepared by Olha Della Cava

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Center for Migration Studies
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Summary Information

Repository	Center for Migration Studies
Creator	Catholic Committee for Refugees (U.S.).
Creator	National Catholic Welfare Conference.
Title	National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Immigration, New York Office and the Catholic Committee for Refugees Records
Date [inclusive]	1921-1965
Extent	15.0 Linear feet in 31 boxes.
Language	English
Language of Materials note	Materials are mostly in English, with some German, Italian, Polish, and other languages.
Abstract	The National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC), Department of Immigration, New York Office and Catholic Committee for Refugees Records pertain to the work and activities of these two separate agencies of the NCWC from 1921-1965. The materials, in general, focus on the port reception and resettlement of immigrants and refugees, especially orphans.

Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Immigration, New York Office and the Catholic Committee for Refugees Records (CMS 024); Box; Folder.

Biographical/Historical note

National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Immigration, New York Office

The National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Immigration, New York Office was opened in 1921, one year after the establishment of the national office in Washington DC. The New York office was located at 61 Whitehall Street, directly opposite the Ellis Island Ferry and functioned as a port office. On its staff was a port director, Thomas F. Mulholland (1921-1964) and Donald G. Hohl (1964-1970s) and an Ellis Island representative, Sarah Weadick. Its activities included assistance at the pier to disembarking immigrants and social service work among those detained on Ellis Island. More specifically, the port office staff met newly arriving immigrants, rendered all necessary assistance in the matter of baggage, money exchange, placing on trains, turning over to relatives, and other activities. They visited detained immigrants, learned their needs and attempted to solve their problems and forwarded for action in Washington memoranda concerning appeals. Together with other welfare agencies, the New York Immigration Bureau personnel collected and distributed clothing to those in need. They interviewed relatives and friends who wished to send for people, arranged for marriages under Catholic auspices, and prepared affidavits or other legal papers for hospital treatment, applications for permits to reenter and for non-quota and preference visas.

The Catholic Committee for Refugees

The Catholic Committee for Refugees was organized at the annual meeting of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in 1963 under the name Committee for Catholic Refugees from Germany as a response to Nazi repression. The first Episcopal Chairman was the Archbishop of New Orleans, Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, the first director of the committee, Reverend Joseph D. Ostermann. The first office for the committee was at the Leo House, a German immigrant aid center in New York City. The committee was later charged with the operation of the Bishops' Orphan Program which secured adoptive homes in the United States for approximately 4000 orphaned in children from Europe and Asia. The committee also aided in the relocation of immigrant professionals and priests. Ostermann was succeeded as director by Reverend Emil N. Komora in 1940 when the named changed to the Catholic Committee for Refugees. In 1965, the committee was subsumed into the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Immigration.

Scope and Contents note

This collection holds files pertain to the work of the New York Office of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC), Department of Immigration and the Committee for Catholic Refugees from 1921-1965. Although the materials span two agencies they have been arranged by folder title into a single alphabetical sequence. The types of materials include agenda, clippings, correspondence,

lists, memos, minutes, pamphlets, press releases, photographs, reports, speeches, telegrams, notes, programs, legislation, annual reports, statistics, bulletins, newsletters, and other materials. In addition to documenting the functions of the two agencies, the materials in the collection were also generated by related organizations to which staff members belonged, including the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration, the National Conference of Catholic Charities, the National Council on Naturalization and Citizenship, the New York Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, the US Committee for the Care of European Children, and other organizations.

In addition, the materials document certain special missions undertaken by the two agencies on behalf of displaced priests, scholars, and orphans, the latter being of particular concern to the Committee for Catholic Refugees. There are over two boxes of correspondence with Monsignor Landi, Director of the Italian Mission of Catholic relief Services, NCWC regarding adoption of Italian war orphans, as well as materials on Lithuanian, Ukrainian, and Polish orphans. Some of the latter were subsequently resettled in Mexico (the Mexico Project). There is also a substantial amount of statistical material (completed forms and passenger lists) on aliens arriving in the United States from Shanghai (Shanghai Project).

Arrangement note

This collection is arranged alphabetically.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies 1977-1978

Revision Description

Edited by Nicole Greenhouse for DACS compliance. April 2013

Conditions Governing Access note

Open to researchers by appointment. Some materials have been separated and restricted.

Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright is owned by the Center for Migration Studies. Permission to publish materials must be requested before use.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

This collection was transferred to CMS from the New York Office of the United States Catholic Conference Division of Migration and Refugees Services.

Processing Information note

This collection was originally processed in 1977-1978. In 2013, This collection was entered into the Archivists' Toolkit and folder descriptions were simplified from the original print finding aid. (The original finding aid is available in print upon request). Folder titles in the container list online may vary from the the physical folder titles. Physical folder titles either do not exist on the folders or are extremely brief. In each box is a copy of the original container list for the box. The finding aid was also updated for compliance with *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DAC5)*.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Other collections related to the National Catholic Welfare Conference Department of Immigration, New York Office and Catholic Committee for Refugees Records (CMS 024) include:

National Catholic Welfare Conference, Department of Immigration(CMS 023)

The United States Catholic Conference, Department of Immigration Records(CMS 023A)

The United States Catholic Conference Migration and Refugee Services Records, New York Office Records (CMS 023B)

United States Catholic Conference Migration and Refugee Services, New York Office Records (CMS 023C)

Most Reverend Stephen J. Donahue (CMS 023D)

War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference Records (CMS 026)

Separated Materials note

Restricted materials were separated into Boxes 110-111 in collection CMS 023.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- War Relief Services-National Catholic Welfare Conference (U.S.).

Geographic Name(s)

- Shanghai (China) |x Emigration and immigration |x History |y 20th century.

Personal Name(s)

- Komora, Emil N., approximately 1899-1971
- Ostermann, Joseph D. (Joseph Dionysius), 1894-

Subject(s)

- Church work with immigrants |z Catholic Church.
- Church work with refugees |z United States
- Emigration and immigration |z United States
- Orphans |x Services for |z United States |x History.
- Religious refugees |z Europe |z History.

Other Finding Aids note

The original inventory is available in print upon request.

Collection Inventory

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American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Services: Financial accounts, United Nations Policy Statement on Unattached Youth among Hungarian Refugees, and a proposal for Amending the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 1956-1957	1
American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Services: Ad Hoc Committee on Children on Hungarian Minors and US sponsors 1957-1958	1
American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Services: Health, Education, and Welfare, Department, Committee on Korea, Reports of Sub-Committee on Camp Kilmer experience, Hungarian Youth and Teenage Problems, and Adoption of Children 1958	2
American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Services: Material by Katherine Brownell Oettinger of the Children's Bureau, US Department of Health, Education, and	2

Welfare, policy on Adoptions, Annual meeting minutes, Committee on Southeast Asia minutes, Manual on Intercountry Adoption prepared by International Social Service 1958

American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Services: Material on No. 123
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare on proxy adoptions 1958-1959 2

American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Services: Ad Hoc Children
Committee, List of Officers and Board of Directors, US Committee for Refugees, copy
of A Study of Proxy Adoptions, Senate Bill introduced by John F. Kennedy, Intercountry
Adoption legislation 1956-1962 3

American Relief for Poland: Resettlement of Polish Orphans 1954 3

American Relief for Poland: Boston 1948-1950 3

American Relief for Poland: East St. Louis, Illinois 1949 3

American Relief for Poland: Los Angeles, California 1949 3

Apostolic Delegate: Correspondence on Catholic Refugees from Germany 1937-1939 3

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