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PRIMARY SOURCES

A Daughter's Love:
Lisa Stein, Senator Charles Andrews, and
American Refugee Policy during the Holocaust

by

Augustine Meaher*

**Correspondence of Lisa Stein, U.S. Senator Charles
Andrews, Charles Andrews, Jr., and Others,
October 1941–August 1943.¹**

The response of southern Jews to the European refugee crisis following the rise of Hitler is understudied, and Charles Oscar Andrews, the senior senator from Florida from 1936 to 1946, is not a politician usually associated with international relations, refugees, or the Holocaust. His papers in the University of Florida's special collections, however, contain a rich correspondence related to his attempts, with the involvement of his office staff and his son, to aid a Jewish constituent obtain an entry visa for her mother trapped in Vichy France. Historians have previously explored how some southern politicians such as Alabama's Lister Hill and Texas's Lyndon B. Johnson helped constituents gain visas for relatives to escape war-torn Europe, but this is the first and so far only discovery of a Florida senator providing such assistance.² This case study also provides an example of southern Jews being affected by international events and acting to help Jews outside of the South.

These letters are unique in that they contain not only correspondence between a Jewish constituent and a southern senator but also include communications to and from the various federal agencies involved in the visa process and letters from the actual visa applicant in Vichy France, which together provide a complete picture of the process and the role played by

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each. Two other aspects make these documents and situation worthy of note. The Jewish petitioner was a recent refugee who had fled Hitler's Germany, and the European location was Vichy France rather Germany or other countries like Poland or Austria typically associated with such an issue.

These letters offer a valuable example of how some southern Jews responded to the rise of Nazism and came together to assist those trying to flee persecution, thus they confirm earlier historical interpretations. Dan J. Puckett, for example, argues that this response was most common among Jews who were relatively newly arrived in the United States. The initial responses and continued Nazi persecution ultimately led to cooperation between such people and more established Jews. Nonetheless, fear of attracting unwanted attention in the heavily Protestant Jim Crow South ensured that many southern Jews maintained a low profile in these endeavors. Thus, many Jews throughout the South "organized themselves locally and at the state level to support persecuted Jews" but did not criticize President Franklin Roosevelt's restrictive immigration policy, since doing so would not have sat well in the solidly Democratic region.³ Southern Jews remained constrained by southern political norms.

Setting the Stage

In 1940, Florida had approximately twenty-five thousand Jewish residents who mainly resided in Jacksonville and Miami Beach.⁴ Liselotte "Lisa" Stein, age twenty-six, with her husband, Friedrich Stein, age thirty-two, owned and ran a fifty-seven acre chicken farm valued for tax purposes at two hundred dollars outside of Sanford. Friedrich, who had raised chickens in Germany, was imprisoned in a concentration camp until relatives obtained his release and helped him flee to their home in Belize. The Jewish Agricultural Association awarded him seven hundred dollars to move to Sanford, and the local community contributed another three thousand dollars to allow him to purchase land.⁵ The Steins in occupational terms were "very southern," and Florida, especially its central part where farms and citrus orchards dominated, was still very southern. The nearest sizable Jewish community was in Orlando, thirty miles to the south, home of the largest Jewish community in central Florida, estimated to be near one thousand by 1940.⁶ Jews held prominent positions in the citrus and agricultural sectors that were the basis of Orlando's economy.⁷

Jewish Orlando was a tight-knit ethnic community where "everyone knew everyone else and assumed roles in the business, civic and cultural life of the life of the city," which included several kosher establishments and a Jewish cemetery.⁸ It was this Jewish community that supported Lisa Stein in her attempt to gain a visa initially for her parents, Friedrich and Bertha Marx, and then, following the death of her father in December 1941, for her widowed mother.

Without such community support, the State Department bureaucracy would have been insurmountable for the Steins and other Jews. To secure a U.S. entry visa, a bond of five hundred dollars was required, and two people unrelated to each other had to sponsor the individual to ensure that the immigrant did not become a "public charge" for at least five years. Individual Jews throughout the South "sponsored family members and numerous nonfamilial refugees."⁹ In doing so they were continuing to support Jews outside of the country in times of trouble as well as members of their own community. Abraham M. Bornstein provided the five-hundred-dollar bond necessary for Lisa Stein's mother to receive an entry visa. Bornstein's sponsorship of Stein's mother epitomized how Jews supported each other. Bornstein was originally from Lodz, Poland, and was a silk manufacturer in Paterson, New Jersey, later in Pennsylvania. He moved to Florida for health reasons in 1931 and became a citrus grower and leader in the Jewish communities of Orlando and central Florida.¹⁰ His assistance to Stein's application for a visa for her mother was crucial and complemented the political support of Senator Andrews.

Andrews's Florida office coordinated the senator's aid to his Jewish constituents. From this office, his son Charles O. Andrews, Jr., a lawyer in Sanford, served as the conduit for many of the letters between the senator, the senator's Washington office, and Lisa Stein. Charles O. Andrews, Jr.'s main correspondent in Washington, D.C., was Orja Sutliff, chief of staff for Senator Andrews in Washington. The events of the war disrupted Stein's efforts many times as the immigration process became increasingly difficult. Senator Andrews and his office continued to support her efforts, however, by applying pressure to an unfriendly and unhelpful State Department, whose bureaucracy took no account of the chaos and confusion caused by the war except to view it as a possible cause of a flood of undesirable immigrants. The senator's office also guided Stein through the

*Senator Charles O. Andrews
of Florida, 1939.
(Library of Congress.)*

State Department bureaucracy, explaining every new wartime regulation and how best to comply while applying pressure to the State Department.

These letters also provide an interesting insight into a little-studied area of American diplomatic history. American diplomatic relations and interactions with Vichy France are usually a footnote in wider diplomatic histories of American-French relations. Vichy foreign policy remains an understudied area of French history as well. *Vichy France and the Jews*, by Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton, provides an impressive analysis of the policies Jews in Vichy France had to cope with but says little about the plight of non-French Jews in Vichy attempting to escape Europe and reach the United States. Adam Rayski's *The Choice of the Jews under Vichy* provides an excellent understanding of the daily life of Jews in Vichy, but again his research is primarily focused on the experience of French Jews; he mentions American diplomatic relations with Vichy only tangentially.¹¹

The correspondence reprinted in this article thus provides new insight into the plight of German Jews in Vichy France seeking to gain entry into the United States and reinforces earlier analysis of State Department intransigence in allowing refugees fleeing Nazi tyranny to enter the United States. They also offer excellent insight into the plight of those trying to escape the Holocaust. Finally, these letters and telegrams provide a

human face to the refugees desperately seeking entry into the United States and a detailed insight into the bureaucratic maze they faced.

This human face appears at its most poignant when Bertha Marx, Stein's mother, describes her situation in a detention camp:

Sometimes everything seems like a nightmare and I just cannot get [out of] it. But now I know that it was destiny that I should not see you any more. Thinking of you gives me the strength to stand it as long as I will be able to. I know that you, my dearest beloved child, have done everything in your power, but the authorization did not come! If the same should arrive today or tomorrow it may mean that I am saved.¹²

Lisa Stein described herself as a Jewish German refugee in the United States:

My husband and I are Jewish refugees from Germany. My husband lost both of his parents by the persecution of Hitler, his father was found hanged in his house one morning, his mother died two months later as consequence of the shock she had suffered.

My husband was brought to the concentration camp "Dachau." All our property was taken. [We received a] visa for British Honduras where my husband[']s cousin resides and where we could wait until our American Quota number was called up, was the reason that he got released from "Dachau." He got crippled in this camp and is crippled since.¹³

Internment camp at de Gurs, France, 1939.
 (Collection Amicale du Camp de Gurs, Museum
 of the History of Justice, Crime, and Punishment.)

The Steins escaped Germany mere days before the outbreak of World War II in Europe in 1939—a condition of her husband’s release from Dachau—and arrived in Tampa in February 1940.¹⁴ Lisa Stein stated, “From the very day, we entered this country, we tried to [save] the life of my old parents by bringing them over to this country.”¹⁵ Her parents “were evacuated from Heidelberg on a sealed train on October 23, 1940, and were placed in a concentration camp, Camp de Gurs, Basses Pyrenees, Unoccupied France.”¹⁶ Nazi Germany viewed unoccupied France as a “dumping ground for Germany’s pariahs.”¹⁷

Policies, Procedures, and Antisemitism

Many in the State Department were wary of the country becoming the final destination of “Germany’s pariahs.” A would-be refugee faced numerous barriers to receiving an entry visa for the United States. No specific refugee class existed, and entry was severely limited by the Immigration Act of 1924, which imposed annual quotas based on national origin. A potential immigrant had to wait until a space was available within the quota, which could be over a year after their visa was approved.¹⁸ Breckinridge Long, a Missouri lawyer well connected in the Democratic Party who served as U.S. Ambassador to Mussolini’s Italy from 1933 to 1936, had become an Assistant Secretary of State for Special Problems in January 1940 and was responsible for the Visa Division.¹⁹ Chief of the Visa Division, Avra Warren, assisted Long. Shortly after the fall of France in summer 1940, Long wrote:

We can delay and effectively stop for a temporary period of indefinite length the number of immigrants into the United States. We could do this simply by advising our consuls to put every obstacle in the way and to require additional evidence and to resort to various administrative devices which would postpone and postpone and postpone the granting of the visas.²⁰

Long’s antisemitism continued to restrict the entry of Jews into the United States throughout most of the war.²¹

Secretary of State Cordell Hull declined to implement Long’s proposal but instructed State Department officials abroad to “take additional caution when screening refugees.” Following American entry into World War II, all applications had to be reviewed by an interdepartmental committee in Washington to ensure that a potential refugee did not pose a

threat to national security. Lisa Stein and Senator Andrews corresponded most frequently with Avra M. Warren, who supported Long's restrictive policies. Warren visited Europe shortly after Long's memo and advised American consuls to "curtail drastically the entry of refugees into the United States."²² The senator's office also corresponded with Warren's assistants, Eliot B. Coulter and Howard K. Travers.

Breckinridge Long, c. 1934.
(*Library of Congress.*)

Vichy France maintained diplomatic relations with the United States but, as a Nazi client and collaborationist state, its government was deeply antisemitic. Vichy did nothing to facilitate the departure of Jews from its territory to safe countries; indeed, it actively sought to prevent their departure. To leave Vichy France, a refugee first had to obtain an entry visa for an overseas country. Once an entry visa had been obtained, a refugee qualified for a French exit visa. By summer 1942 it had become extremely difficult to obtain a French exit visa and technically impossible if a person had entered France after 1936. It was, however, still possible to obtain a visa by bribery, usually facilitated by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

*Exterior of the HIAS office at 425 Lafayette St., New York City.
(Ontherescuefront.wordpress.com/2018/06/15/.)*

*Jewish refugees look out from the deck of the SS Serpa Pinto
before its departure from the port of Lisbon, September 1941.
(Photograph by Milton Koch. United States Holocaust
Memorial Museum, Washington, DC.)*

(HIAS), the sole Jewish emigration agency recognized by the Vichy government. HIAS, a U.S. organization, had arranged with Chase National Bank so that the Banque de France's frozen dollars in the United States could be released against the francs paid by prospective immigrants to HIAS and consuls in Vichy.²³

With exit visa in hand, a refugee then had to obtain a transit visa, usually for Portugal and/or Spain. As Lisa Stein presciently warned, "the hard thing is to get them to Lisbon, because Portugal only issues transit-visas for people whose departure [is a certainty.]"²⁴ Portugal, a neutral country and generally considered more sympathetic to the allied cause than Franco's Spain, served as the primary transit nation for refugees fleeing to the United States. William L. Shirer described Lisbon in October 1940 as "the one remaining port on the Continent from which you can get a boat or a plane to New York."²⁵ Yet Portuguese authorities would only issue transit visas if the refugee could show proof of having purchased an onward ticket, and the transit visa was valid for only fourteen days. Another possibility was to proceed to French North Africa, which was under Vichy control, and make one's way from there to Casablanca and thence on to Lisbon via Tangiers. However, this route was even more difficult and was hindered by the lack of the necessary consulates for transit visas—despite having being made famous by the film *Casablanca*. The course of the war made obtaining the necessary visas and travel increasingly difficult.²⁶

The visa process was complicated enough, but for most refugees in unoccupied France the mere act of going to the consuls in Vichy and Marseille was all but impossible. Most were detained in the Gurs internment camp. The camp was perennially short of water, and an individual had only a slight chance, a little over 10 percent, of emigrating from it.²⁷ Once the preliminary visa steps had been completed, a would-be refugee was often transferred to the transit camp of Les Milles, which, although an improvement from Gurs, still remained a "soul-deadening experience."²⁸ Les Milles allowed inmates day passes to visit consulates, a policy that greatly facilitated exiting Vichy France. Some internees were even housed in overcrowded Marseille hotels. The frequent moving of internees between camps and hotels made it all the more difficult for their applications to be processed.

*Prisoners chop wood in the Les Milles internment camp in southern France, April 1942.
(United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Ilse Cohn Rothschild.)*

Interaction between Lisa Stein and Senator Andrews and His Office

In October 1941, Lisa Stein approached Senator Andrews's office in Orlando and requested the senator's assistance in obtaining a visa for her mother. The U.S. had recently closed its consulates in Nazi-occupied Europe, and the Vichy government believed these changes meant the United States would stop issuing visas to refugees; thus Vichy threatened to close the camps near Marseille.²⁹ Senator Andrews's papers indicate this was the first time he was asked for such assistance by any of his constituents, and it is unclear why Stein approached him. Florida's other senator, Claude Pepper, was aware of the Jewish refugee plight, having returned to the United States in 1938 on an ocean liner carrying four hundred Jewish refugees, but in "his comments to the press, Pepper neglected to mention them."³⁰ Senator Pepper's files do not indicate that any constituents approached him for such assistance.³¹ Furthermore, none of Florida's five congressional representatives took much if any interest in the plight of Europe's Jews.

Andrews, Jr., subsequently requested that his father "do anything possible to assist this party[,] she seems very worthy."³² The senator's first response was simply informational, but the Stein case clearly caught his attention. He wrote personally to the head of the Visa Division, "I shall greatly appreciate if you will personally look into this case and if it is at all possible, approve the application for a visa."³³ He promised his son, "[I] will keep in behind it."³⁴ Senator Andrews did indeed keep behind it, most likely because of his connection to central Florida, including its small but politically active Jewish community.

Stein came agonizingly close to getting her mother out of Vichy France. In November 1941, the State Department informed Senator Andrews that a visa had been granted. By informing the senator of the issuance of the visa, the Visa Division likely assumed that the senator would cease pressuring the staff. Furthermore, this meant that Stein would know that her mother had received a visa, which without the senator's intervention, she would have only found out once her mother received her visa and informed her of having it, something that would have taken months.

*Florida Democratic legislator
Charles O. Andrews, Jr., c. 1949.
(State Archives of Florida,
Florida Memory.)*

*American Export Lines
advertisement for pass-
age on the SS Excalibur.
(ssmaritime.com/Excalibur.htm.)*

The senator followed up by contacting American Export Lines, a passenger shipping company, to advise them that Bertha Marx had the appropriate visas and ask them to hold her booking longer than the customary seven days prior to sailing. The senator's request meant the booking was held until four days prior to departure, but the additional three days was insufficient for Bertha Marx to obtain the necessary exit and transit visas that could only be obtained once an American entry visa was obtained and to make it to Lisbon. The American Export Lines operated a route between the United States and the Mediterranean that provided the primary means of escape from Europe: its Lisbon-New York route was a lifeline for refugees who could make it to Lisbon.³⁵ The Pan American Clipper airliner also flew from Lisbon to New York, but it carried far fewer passengers and was much more expensive.³⁶

American entry into World War II and the German declaration of war against the United States on December 11, 1941, did not directly affect Vichy France, which remained neutral (albeit pro-German) and maintained diplomatic relations with the United States. American entry into the war resulted in the need for an attorney to assist Bertha Marx in

securing a new American entry visa. Unsurprisingly, Andrews, Jr., recommended the services of his law partner, Dozier DeVane, to guide Stein through the newly created Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee. DeVane was assisted by Barney J. Cohen, another law partner of Andrews, Jr. Stein also contacted HIAS to help negotiate the byzantine visa system. The involvement of a United States senator ensured that Lisa Stein received not only general HIAS assistance but also direct support from Isaac L. Asofsky, executive director of the immigration agency.³⁷

However, as a German national, Lisa Stein's mother's status now changed from that of would-be immigrant to enemy alien. This greatly increased the difficulty of Stein's receiving an American visa for her mother as transatlantic voyages became increasingly rare. The possibility remained that at any time the war would result in a break in American-Vichy relations or the German occupation of unoccupied France. Stein worried in early 1942:

Important is, that we got the invitation for the hearing before the appeal board and if we are able to present the case in the very [near] future (that means before we break relations with France, which I am afraid will be inevitable).³⁸

In mid-February 1942 Sutliff warned, "I have been advised by Mr. McKee of the State Department that all visa applications of 'enemy aliens' will be decided on by the Inter-departmental Visa Review Committee." He continued, "From what I am able to gather on an off the record basis, these applications are going to be very difficult to put through."³⁹ Subsequent events verified the correctness of Sutliff's prediction. Two months later the State Department informed Stein that the preliminary examination "has not resulted in a favorable recommendation to the American consular officer concerned."⁴⁰ Stein began the appeals process and advised Andrews, Jr., that the State Department letter "is the usual letter, everybody is getting, who applies for a new authorization."⁴¹ The State Department was again placing a barrier in the way of those seeking entry to the United States by requiring all applicants to undergo a lengthy examination, something impossible for many to attend or support. The German declaration of war on the United States meant new entry regulations for the United States, as Warren explained:

A reexamination of Mrs. Marx's case has been necessitated in view of the recent regulations pertaining to enemy aliens. Mrs. Marx, by reason of

her German nationality is classifiable as an enemy alien, and under the established procedure, her case, after preliminary examination, will be considered by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee and will then be placed before the Board of Appeals.⁴²

The correspondence reprinted below was written during the darkest days of World War II. From it one can follow an individual through the refugee process and gain appreciation for the efforts of Jews and southern politicians to assist those caught in wartorn Europe. The correspondence presents an important window into some of the internal documents within the State Department and also shows how a United States senator could influence the process, albeit in a limited manner. The senator's efforts to bring Bertha Marx to the United States were ultimately unsuccessful. Because of the course of the war in Europe and the State Department bureaucracy, by the time the final visa had been issued Marx had already been deported to Auschwitz, where she was doomed to a fate her last letter indicates she expected. The documents confirm what is already known about the refugee process. However, they also illuminate a previously unknown example of a United States senator attempting to help a constituent bring a Jewish refugee into the United States, despite the fact that he was neither generally concerned with Jewish affairs nor particularly interested in international relations. He was simply supporting a constituent in her battles with the State Department. The letters also reveal how international events affected a southern Jewish community and how Jews responded to the rise of Nazism and aided a newly arrived member of their community.

Conclusion

Bertha Marx was transported to Auschwitz shortly after her last letter to her daughter, a fate she alluded to in that final letter. The break in American-Vichy relations and the German occupation of previously unoccupied France resulted in the deportation of almost all Jewish internees. The Steins were divorced in 1944 but then disappear from the historical record; hopefully the publication of these letters will lead to more information about them. However, these letters alone serve as an amazing example of a daughter's love for her parents at a time of great international and personal tragedy.

-oOo-

**Correspondence of Lisa Stein, U.S. Senator Charles
Andrews, Charles Andrews, Jr., and Others,
October 1941–August 1943.**

[The letters below appear as in the original without corrections.]

**Charles O. Andrews, Jr., the senator's son, to Orja Sutliff, chief of staff
to Senator Andrews in Washington, D.C., October 4, 1941**

Mrs. Lisa Stein, Route 2, box 159, Sanford, has asked that we assist her in securing a visa for her mother and father from unoccupied France in time to come to America on the S.S. Excalibur sailing from Lisbon November 7th.

Her father's name is Friedrich Marx, and he is in Barracks No. 24, Camp de Gurs, Basses [Pyrenees], Unoccupied France. Her mother's name is Bertha Marx, and she is in Barracks 8 of the same Camp.

Mrs. Stein has deposited with the Refugee Committee ticket for passage on the Excalibur and also railroad ticket from the camp to Lisbon, and has put up bond for their admission to this country. All that needs to be done to permit them to sail on November 7th is for the American Consul at Marseilles to grant them a visa to permit their passage to embarkation on November 7th.

On August 30th she applied to Mr. A. M. Warren, Acting Chief, Visa Division, State Department, Washington, for the visa. She understands its file number is VD 811,111, Marx, Friedrich.

Please do anything possible to assist this party as she seems very worthy.

Senator Charles Andrews, telegram to Andrews, Jr., October 7, 1941

State Department advises unable to say whether or not visa for Friedrich Marx will be issued in time for embarkation on November 7th. Have so advised Mrs. Lisa Stein, Sanford, and will wire her more fully tomorrow.

Lisa Stein to Andrews, Jr., October 10, 1941

I called you twice yesterday but could not get in touch with you. I am in receipt of a telegram from Washington: I quote:

Reference Friedrich Marx Application For Visa Now Under Consideration By State Department But Unable To Determine When Visa Will Be Issued Indications Are That Approval Will Not Be Had This Week Have Made Personal Appeal To State Department And Am Doing Everything Possible To Expedite Action And Issuance Of Visa Will Advise You Further Immediately Upon Receipt Of Definite Information. Charles O Andrews US Senator

The reason I called you up over the phone, my dear Mr. Andrews, was, to assure you again of my gratitude and appreciation of what you have done for me.

Cover memorandum to message below, October 17, 1941

Charles: Talked with State Department also, on this. Will keep in behind it.

Senator Andrews to Avra M. Warren, Chief, Visa Division, U.S. State Department, October 17, 1941

Re: Visa, Friedrich Marx, VD 811,111.

Your division of the State Department has requested Mrs. Lisa Stein of Sanford Florida, to submit a financial report for Abraham M. Bornstein, who executed a bond for Mr. & Mrs. Friedrich Marx, to the effect that they would not become a public charge for five years after admission to the United States.

Mrs. Stein has forwarded this report to me requesting that I place it in your hands, and accordingly, you will find it attached hereto.

Opposite page: *"Mrs. Lisa Stein . . . has asked that we assist her in securing a visa for her mother and father." Charles O. Andrews, Jr., to Orja Sutliff, chief of staff to his father, Senator Charles O. Andrews, October 4, 1941.*

(Courtesy of Charles Oscar Andrews Papers, Special and Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.)

Mrs. Stein has been advised by the American Export Lines that it is too late to cancel the reservations which have been made for Mr. & Mrs. Marx to sail from Lisbon, Portugal on November 7th, and if these reservations are not used she will forfeit the cost of the tickets which have been paid for, in amount of nearly \$1000, and furthermore, that it will be impossible to secure reservations for space on the American Export Lines, if these are not used, for at least a year.

I shall greatly appreciate it if you will personally look into this case, and if it is at all possible, approve the application for visa in order that Mr. & Mrs. Marx may avail themselves of the reservations to [sail] from Lisbon on November 7th.

Thanking you, and with good wishes,

Stein to Andrews, Jr., October 24, 1941

To-day I got a letter from the Lauier Travel Service and I want to inform you right away about the contents. They write, I quote: "Dear Mrs. Stein. I have a letter from the American Export Line and they suggest that at present we leave the holding of your parents reservation up to their Lisbon office.

They say, that Lisbon holds space until four days before sailing, then it is usually cancelled unless word is received from the prospective passengers by that time. They say, that it may be possible that the Department of State will give advisory approval of the immigration visa in time for them to sail as scheduled. And they further advise that they will appreciate it if we will notify them immediately you receive word that this visa has been granted.

However, when you are certain that the visa will not be obtained for your father and mother in time for them to use the accommodations on the "Excalibur", they want me to notify them at once and they will cable their Lisbon office issuing them the necessary instructions.

So, when you hear anything, please advise me. And if you do not hear by November 1st from the State Department, please so advise me and I'll tell the American Export Line."

Andrews, Jr., to Stein, October 25, 1941

I am passing this information on to Senator Andrews with the suggestion that he again contact the Visa Division of the State Department

and request that they expedite consideration of your parents' application for the visas.

Andrews, Jr., to Sutliff, October 25, 1941

Mrs. Stein has advised me that the American Export Lines have advised her that they will hold the reservations for her parents until four days before sailing time. The Excalibur sails from Lisbon on November 7th.

Please keep in touch with the State Department and do everything possible to secure the granting of the visas in time for sailing on November 7th.

Warren to Senator Andrews, November 13, 1941

With reference to your interest in the visa case of **Mr. Friedrich and Mrs. Berta Marx**,

I take pleasure in informing you that, after careful consideration of the documents submitted, the Department has given advisory approval to the appropriate American Officer at **Marseille** for the issuance of **immigration visas**.

Andrews, Jr., to Senator Andrews, November 18, 1941

Dear Dad:

Mrs. Lisa Stein has been advised by the American Export Lines that space has been reserved for her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Friedrich Marx, on the SS "Exeter" sailing from Lisbon on December 26th.

She has also been advised that the State Department has authorized the issuance of a visa by the Consul at Marseilles.

Please check this and do everything possible to assure that the visa is actually issued and that these people are able to arrive in Lisbon in time to sail on this boat.

Andrews, Jr., telegram to Senator Andrews, December 18, 1941

Re passport visa Friedrich Marx please check with State Department and find out if visa issued in this matter for SS Exeter from Lisbon December 26th also try to find out if that ship will sail that date. Please advise.

Senator Andrews, telegram to Andrews, Jr., December 18, 1941

Retel. Friedrich Marx. State Department has authorized American Consul at Marseilles to issue visa. It is not customary for State Department to follow up in these cases. In order to determine whether visa has actually been issued it would be necessary to cable consul at Marseilles and this can be done if Mrs. Stein wishes to bear expense.

Maritime commission under strict orders not to release any information regarding movement of ships so far impossible for us to determine whether SS Exeter will sail from Lisbon December 26. Will continue efforts and give you further report tomorrow.

**Senator Andrews, telegram to Andrews, Jr., copy mailed to Stein,
December 22, 1941**

Re Friedrich Marx. Maritime Commission just advised that American Export Lines Service has been discontinued and SS Exeter will not sail from Lisbon on December 26.

Stein to Andrews, Jr., December 27, 1941

I am in receipt of the two telegrams and though the contents was a very sad one for me, I want to thank you very much for your kindness and your warm interest in that case.

I have asked the American Export Lines to refund the money.

Am pretty certain my folks are in receipt of their visas now although I did not hear from them since that cable I lately read to you over the phone. They are in the transit camp Les Milles (near Marseilles) Groupe 13 and they could not have left camp . . . otherwise.

I learned that there is one chance left and that is the Pan-American Clipper Lisbon-New York, but I do not know how to get a reservation there. I could easily do it if the Export Line refunds the money. I am positive that they take passengers which are in Lisbon and have their American visa. But the hard thing is to get them to Lisbon, because Portugal only issues transit-visas for people whose departure [is a certainty.]

Andrews, Jr., to Stein, January 7, 1942

I understand that there will be one more American Export Line sailing from Lisbon, carrying the American Diplomatic Corps from Germany.

I would suggest that you keep in contact with the American Export Lines and if they have any space available for passengers other than the Diplomatic Corps, they might be able to work your parents in, in view of their disastrous experiences in missing the November 7th boat.

The only other suggestion I have is for you to get in touch with Pan-American Airways who are operating the clippers from Lisbon. It is possible they will continue to operate from Lisbon, for a while at least, after which time it seems they will be operated direct from London, and of course it will then be impossible to secure space for your parents.

Andrews, Jr., to Sutliff, January 23, 1942

Mrs. Lisa Stein, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marx, has made deposit for tickets on the Pan-American Clipper for about March 1st. However, it might be possible for them to secure passage on an earlier plane if they could secure a visa to enter Portugal and stay pending the securing of definite reservations.

Please check with the proper authorities and advise us. Mrs. Stein will gladly pay the cost of any cables or other necessary messages in connection with this matter.

Andrews, Jr., to Stein, January 28, 1942

Attached is a copy of telegram received from Senator Andrews. You will note he suggests that you get in touch with the Portuguese consul and attempt to get this visa. The nearest Portuguese consul to Orlando [is in Tampa].

Barney J. Cohen to Stein, February 9, 1942

On my arrival here [Williams Hotel, Daytona Beach, FL] I found the following telegram from the Hias which was wired from New York at 3:26 P.M.:

"Received this morning check from Mrs. Stein for transportation her mother Bertha Marx. We cabling our European office facilitate and expedite emigration will keep you informed." HIAS

I feel confident that Mr. Asofsky will use all of the resources at his command to do whatever possible in the shortest possible time.

In turn, I will keep you posted if I should [hear] anything from New York between now and the time I plan to go thru Sanford on Wednesday.

*"I learned that there is one chance left and that is the Pan-American Clipper
Lisbon–New York." Lisa Stein to Charles O. Andrews, Jr., December 27, 1941.
(Courtesy of Charles Oscar Andrews Papers, Special and Area
Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries,
University of Florida, Gainesville.)*

With kind regards to Frederich and yourself,

Andrews, Jr., to Sutliff, February 13, 1942

You have a file on the request of Bertha and Friedrich Marx for a visa to leave unoccupied France. Their daughter has just learned that Mr. Marx has died.

Mrs. Marx is at the Hotel Levant, Rue Fruchier 37, Marseille, France. Her daughter secured reservation for her for clipper passage early in March. They have just been advised of the new alien and naturalization requirements as published in the Federal Register of January 20, 1942, page 376. They have also some additional information which suggests that they retain a lawyer in their effort to secure admission of an enemy alien under present conditions. Their previous permission was granted prior to the declaration of war and is probably of no value now.

Please check with the State Department and advise if it is necessary to file a new application for permission to enter the country and if so is there a place where a lawyer could and should be of assistance.

Sutliff, telegram to Andrews, Jr., February 17, 1942

Not necessary to file new application. Appeal Board will notify interested parties in time for hearing.

Sutliff to Andrews, Jr., February 17, 1942

With reference to your note of February 13, please be advised that I have contacted the Visa Division of the Department of State in an effort to determine the procedure which should be followed in securing a visa for Mrs. Friedrich Marx.

I have been advised by Mr. McKee of the State Department that all visa applications of "enemy aliens" will be decided on by the Inter-departmental Visa Review Committee and that all interested persons will be notified as to the date of the hearing. Mr. McKee further advised that it is not necessary that a lawyer be employed. However, counsel is permitted. He suggests that affidavits would serve the purpose. . . .

From what I am able to gather on an off the record basis, these applications are going to be very difficult to put through. It is not necessary,

however, that a new application be made as the hearings before the Committee will be on the original application.

Warren to Senator Andrews, March 2, 1942

I have your letter of February 19, 1942 regarding the visa case of Mrs. Friedrich (Berta) Marx.

A reexamination of Mrs. Marx's case has been necessitated in view of the recent regulations pertaining to enemy aliens. Mrs. Marx, by reason of her German nationality, is classifiable as an enemy alien, and under the established procedure, her case, after preliminary examination, will be considered by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee and will then be placed before the Board of Appeals.

Your interest in Mrs. Marx' case has been noted, and you are assured that you will be informed when her case is reached for consideration by the Visa Review Committee. At that time the sponsors or other interested persons, if they so desire, will be given an opportunity to appear before such Committee in person, through an attorney or other intermediary to make such further representations as they may wish.

Andrews, Jr., to Stein, March 3, 1942

Enclosed herewith I hand you a letter to the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee, Washington, which letter should be signed by you and Mr. Stein on the lines indicated, and mailed on to the Committee in the envelope attached thereto.

Let me know if there is anything further I can do, also let me know when you hear from the Interdepartmental Review Committee.

**Stein to Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee, March 3, 1942
(letter enclosed under cover above)**

There is now pending before the Visa Division of the State Department an application for the admission to the United States of Bertha Marx, whose address is now: Hotel Levant, Rue Fruchier 37, Marseille, France.

The undersigned, Lisa Lotte Stein and Friedrich Stein, daughter and son-in-law of Bertha Marx, are presenting this, her request for admission to the United States. The said undersigned Lisa Lotte Stein and Friedrich Stein are German nationals who were deported from Germany on August

27, 1939, and sailed from Amsterdam, Holland, to British Honduras. They were admitted to the United States under quota numbers on February 27, 1940. The mother and father of the undersigned Lisa Lotte Stein left Germany on October 23, 1940, from Heidelberg, Germany, in a sealed train and were placed in a concentration camp, Camp De Gurs, Basses Pyrenees, Unoccupied France. Applications for admission, and affidavits of support, signed by A. Bornstein and the undersigned daughter and son-in-law were duly filed, and passage arranged for sailing to America on the S.S. Excalibur sailing from Lisbon on November 7, 1941.

On November 12, 1941, the State Department authorized the American Consul at Marseille, France, to issue the visa, which of course was too late for sailing on November 7th. Passage was secured on the American Export liner S.S. Exeter to sail from Lisbon on December 26, 1941. War was declared on December 8 and the sailing of the Exeter from Lisbon was cancelled. Mr. Friedrich Marx died in the concentration camp about December 15, 1941.

The undersigned have arranged passage through the Hebrew Immigration Assistance Society, 425 Lafayette, Street, New York City, on a Portuguese steamer sailing from Marseille to New York the latter part of March, 1942. Mrs. Marx's health is bad and the undersigned are very anxious that Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee should recommend to the State Department that a visa be authorized in order to permit Mrs. Marx to sail from Marseille on the passage arranged by the Hebrew Immigration Assistance Society, and it is respectfully requested by this letter that the Department will view with favor this application.

The undersigned intend to become American citizens, and have applied for and been granted their first papers as United States citizens. They are now operating a poultry farm near Sanford, Florida and are a self-sustaining unit of the community and are fully able to support their mother, Mrs. Bertha Marx, should they be granted admission to the United States.

Andrews, Jr., telegram to Sutliff, March 17, 1942

Re Visa Bertha Marx German national. Application for review of this case dated March 3d was filed with Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee. Parties have been advised transportation will be available shortly. Please check and do anything possible to expedite consideration of this application.

Sutliff, telegram to Andrews, Jr., March 17, 1942

Retel Bertha Marx. Possibility of expediting consideration of this application. Please advise by wire if possible exact date when transportation will be available. This information will be material in obtaining earlier consideration.

Senator Andrews, telegram to Sutliff, March 19, 1942

Retel Bertha Marx. Have requested Isaac Asofsky, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, 425 Lafayette Street, New York City, to wire you information regarding arrangements for passage. \$420.00 has been deposited to pay for passage and have been advised ships sail twice monthly and that she will be permitted to sail on one of these ships as soon as the visa is issued. If Mr. Asofsky does not confirm this information please wire me.

Barney J. Cohen, telegram to Isaac Asofsky, Executive Director, HIAS, March 19, 1942

Interdepartmental visa review committee Washington has application of Bertha Marx, Marseille, France under reconsideration. . . . Request has been made for detailed information regarding arrangements for transportation facilities. Please wire Senator Charles O. Andrews, Senate Office Building, Washington, what arrangements have been made also stating that \$420.00 has been deposited for passage and that arrangements have been made for sailing on ships which sail twice a month as outlined to me over the telephone.

Asofsky to Stein, March 23, 1942

We wish to advise you that at the request of Mr. Barney J. Cohen, we have telegraphed to Senator Charles O. Andrews at Washington, D.C., the following concerning funds deposited with us for the transportation expenses of the above:

“We confirm receiving \$420 for transportation expenses Bertha Marx Marseille. We cabled our Lisbon office arrange passage of Bertha Marx from Lisbon or Casablanca soon after visa granted.”

Handwritten at bottom of letter by Lisa Stein:

My mother wrote, that the Marseille office of the "Hias" got in touch with her, re: passage.

I trust that the sailing dates of the ships from Casablanca are kept secret, and therefore no information about a certain day and time of sailing can be given long in advance.

Sutliff to Andrews, Jr., March 23, 1942

I received from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society the following telegram:

"We confirm receiving 420 dollars for transportation expenses Bertha Marx Marseille. We cabled our Lisbon office arrange passage of Bertha Marx from Lisbon or Casablanca soon after visa granted." (signed) HIAS.

As indicated in my telegram to you of the seventeenth, early consideration by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee might be obtained if a definite date for passage had been set which would require a decision on this case out of its regular turn; however, in view of the existing circumstances, there seems to be no way of obtaining consideration outside of its regular chronological order.

I have been assured by an official of the State Department that an "urgent" tag has been attached to this case and it will receive every possible consideration.

HIAS, telegram to Cohen, April 7, 1942

Retel our Cable to Lisbon Office confirming \$420. deposit for transportation Berta Marx passed censor and undoubtedly delivered.

Warren to Stein, April 16, 1942

Madam:

I refer to your interest in the visa case of H. Marx.

A preliminary examination of this case, with particular reference to sections 58.47 and 58.48 of the regulations covering the control of persons entering the United States (Volume 6, Federal Register, pages 5931-5932), issued under the President's proclamation of November 14, 1941 has not

resulted in a favorable recommendation to the American consular officer concerned.

However, the case will be given further consideration by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee, as provided in section 58.57(c) of the aforementioned regulations. This provision gives an opportunity to interested individuals to appear in person, or through an attorney or other intermediary, before the Committee to make such pertinent additional statements as may be deemed appropriate.

There are enclosed two copies of an Application for Appearance which should be completed and forwarded to the Department by the person particularly interested in appearing in the case at a hearing before the Committee. If it is desired that other interested persons or their intermediaries appear at the hearing, additional forms of Application for Appearance will be furnished upon receipt in the Department of a request stating the names of the persons who desire to appear, and the names of the alien visa applicants.

If, on the other hand, it is desired that the case be considered by the Committee without a hearing, it is requested that the Department be so advised.

Upon receipt of an Application for Appearance or a communication indicating that it is desired to have the case considered without a hearing, together with reasonable evidence that the persons seeking admission into the United States have made arrangements to travel to this country, the case will be entered for action by the Committee. Notice will be sent to the interested persons sufficiently in advance of the date set for hearing in order that they may make any arrangements necessary.

Next two pages: *"A preliminary examination of this case . . . has not resulted in a favorable recommendation to the American consular officer concerned."*
 A. M. Warren, Chief, Visa Division, Department of State to Lisa Stein, April 16, 1942.
 (Courtesy of Charles Oscar Andrews Papers, Special and Area
 Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries,
 University of Florida, Gainesville.)

**Eliot B. Coulter, Acting Chief, Visa Division, to Senator Andrews,
April 17, 1942**

I refer to your interest in the visa case of Berta Marx.

The preliminary examination of this case has not resulted in a favorable recommendation to the American consular officer concerned. However, the case will be given further consideration by the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee and the interested persons have been appropriately informed in this connection.

**Stein to Warren, cover letter for applications for appearance,
April 25, 1942**

Please find enclosed applications for appearance before the Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee.

My husband and I are Jewish refugees from Germany. My husband lost both of his parents by the persecution of Hitler, his father was found hanged in his house one morning, his mother died two months later as consequence of the shock she had suffered.

My husband was brought to the concentration camp "Dachau." All our property was taken. [We received a] visa for British Honduras where my husband[']s cousin resides and where we could wait until our American Quota number was called up, was the reason that he got released from "Dachau." He got crippled in this camp and is crippled since. From the very day, we entered this country, we tried to [save] the life of my old parents by bringing them over to this country. But shortly after we had arrived here, my parents got deported from Germany and put in a camp in France. After 13 months of sufferings, of mental and physical torture, my father was sent to another camp near Marseille, where he died after three weeks. My mother was then released and sent to Marseille in order to get her visa. The consul had notified her, that he had a cable from the State Department, dated November 13, containing advisory approval for the issuance of [an] immigration visa. Upon arrival in Marseille, the consul asked her for a new authorization from the State Department, according to the proclamation of November 14 [1941]. My mother is nearly 5 months in Marseille, without having obtained the documents, which were the reason for her release and there is the grave danger of a new and most severe

imprisonment, which may be fatal for her, if she cannot get her visa in the very [near] future.

May I therefore take the privilege to ask for permission to make some additional statements in person before the committee, statements and facts, that might be of interest for a favorable decision.

Stein to Andrews, Jr., May 6, 1942

Yesterday I had letter from my mother, which I do not attach because it is nothing in it of special interest, only one thing is: she writes, that the first new authorizations to issue visa for aliens of enemy nationality have arrived in Marseille. I am very happy about this, because it shows, that exceptions have been made and there is a good chance, I hope, that there will be given a new-authorization in this special case, too. The letter, which was received from the State Department, telling, that the pre-examination has not resulted in a favorable recommendation to the consul is the usual letter, everybody is getting, who applies for a new-authorization. Important is, that we got the invitation for the hearing before the appeal board and if we are able to present the case in the very [near] future (that means before we break relations with France, which I am afraid will be inevitable), I am still hopeful to save my mother. Most important is, that you get the hearing as quick as possible, about everything else I do not worry, there is nobody, I would be more sure of to get this case through but you, my dear Mr. Andrews, and I can only assure you again of my appreciation and my deepest gratitude. You already put in so much of your time, much more than I ever dreamed I could ask you for, and if my mother need not perish by nazi torture and can enter this blessed country of freedom and liberty and safety, I owe it to you.

To be frank, I do not admit much value to those letters, because my people could not say anything, each letter had to pass the censor, you know, and it is impossible for me to show the real meaning of some hidden hints by translation. They can not say we perish with hunger and we do not get food packages but have to write for them, and they can not say we get beaten to death, because all the people over there die from "heart trouble," from a "stroke" and so on, a throb of the heart. Besides my people would not put me in more mortal anguish about them as I already am, by writing me the true conditions, the only letter, which is some kind of

plain, is the letter to my aunt, which I therefore annex. So if you think the letters are of some value, please use them.

I am very anxious of course, to hear from you as soon as you have [an] exact date for the hearing, and if I am allowed to appear as a witness or not, I would just love to tell a little of the persecution we suffered before we left Germany, and what happened to us, until we reached these shores.

Thanking you for your generosity and helpfulness.

Warren to Senator Andrews, May 26, 1942

Referring to your interest in the visa case of Mrs. Bertha Marx, I am pleased to inform you that the case is scheduled for a hearing before an Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee on June 8, 1942, at 9:30 A.M. Other interested persons have been notified, and you, as well as they, will be informed of the decision in the case.

**Dozier DeVane, attorney for Lisa Stein, to Secretary,
Interdepartmental Visa Review Committee, May 28, 1942**

Notice of hearing scheduled for 9:30 A.M., on June 8, 1942, in above matter is acknowledged.

At the present time I plan to be in Washington all of next week and am anxious to be back in my office on June 8th. Therefore, if you can do so I would greatly appreciate your moving this hearing up to any day next week after Monday, June 1st, that is convenient for you.

If you are not able to act upon this request and notify me here by the end of this week, I can be reached at the Raleigh Hotel in Washington all of next week.

**Memorandum for Hearing on Application for Visa. Bertha Marx
Application for Visa [n.d., probably late May 1942]**

Bertha Marx is a German national now at Hotel Levant, Rue Fauchier 37, Marseille, France.

The applicant, together with her husband Friedrich Marx (now deceased) and her daughter Liselotte Stein and her husband, Friedrich Stein, and Mr. Stein's parents, were all residents of Heidelberg, Germany. Liselotte Stein and her husband, Friedrich Stein, are German nationals

who left Germany on August 27, 1939, and sailed from Amsterdam, Holland, to British Honduras. They were admitted to the United States on February 27, 1940, on quota numbers.

Since leaving Germany Mr. Stein's parents have died, his father by suicide and his mother from persecution. Bertha Marx and her husband, Friedrich Marx (now deceased) were evacuated from Heidelberg on a sealed train on October 23, 1940, and were placed in a concentration camp, Camp de Gurs, Basses Pyrenees, Unoccupied France.

Mrs. Stein, the daughter of the applicant in this cause, secured passage for her mother and father on the SS Excalibur of the American Export Line, sailing from Lisbon November 7, 1941. Funds were deposited with the American Export Line and all arrangements were made for sailing. Application was made to the State Department for a visa to be issued permitting Mr. and Mrs. Marx to leave Marseille for Lisbon in time to sail on November 7th. On November 12, 1941, the State Department authorized the American consul at Marseille to issue visa[s] to Mr. and Mrs. Marx. This of course was too late for the sailing on November 7th.

Mrs. Stein then secured accommodations to sail on the SS Exeter scheduled to sail from Lisbon December 26, 1941. War was of course declared on December 8, 1941, and the sailing of the Exeter was cancelled.

On December 21, 1941, Mr. Friedrich Marx died in the concentration camp.

Mrs. Stein, through the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society, 425 Lafayette Street, New York City, made arrangements for her mother, Mrs. Bertha Marx, to sail on a Portuguese steamer from Casa Blanca, North Africa, and arrangements have been made with French authorities for transportation to Casa Blanca. It is of course impossible to secure absolute assurance that the passage is available. However, the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society has advised the State Department direct that there has been deposited with it \$420.00 for transportation expenses for Bertha Marx, Marseille, and that they have cabled their Lisbon office to arrange passage for Mrs. Marx from Lisbon to Casa Blanca as soon as the visa is granted. It appears that these two steps have to be taken simultaneously, and it is impossible to secure one without the other.

This case is therefore before the Committee on its merits, and on the assumption that passage can and will be arranged by the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society. The question is whether or not Bertha Marx

should be admitted to the United States under the existing regulations. Bertha Marx is a woman of advanced age and has been horribly treated by the authorities of Germany. Her bond, under the regulations, has been arranged under the usual procedure, and is vouched for by Mr. A. Bornstein a respectable and substantial citizen of Clermont, Florida.

It would seem that by no stretch of the imagination could Bertha Marx be considered an undesirable alien, and that neither the spirit nor letter of the law providing for the national security of the United States would be violated by the granting of a visa to Bertha Marx, thereby permitting her to secure passage to the United States.

Andrews, Jr., telegram to DeVane, June 3, 1942

Mrs. Stein leaving via bus early tomorrow arriving Washington late Friday. please advise by ten o'clock A.M. Thursday if there has been an advancement of the time for the hearing.

DeVane, telegram to Andrews, Jr., June 4, 1942

Retel Stein case, no notice of advancement of hearing received. Staying over few more days.

DeVane to Stein, June 10, 1942

I herewith return the two photographs of your husband which you gave me in Washington.

Before leaving Washington, I made arrangements to provide funds for cabling notice to the Marseille office of the State Department, in case the appeal board acts favorably on the application for passport for your mother.

I trust you had a safe and pleasant trip home.

Howard K. Travers, Chief, Visa Division, to DeVane, July 29, 1942

With reference to your interest in the visa case of Berta Marx.

I take pleasure in informing you that after further consideration of this case in the light of existing conditions, the Department has given renewed advisory approval to the appropriate American officer at Marseille, France for the issuance of an immigration visa.

Notification of this action has been transmitted by cable. A statement of the exact telegraphic charges will be sent to you at a later date.

DeVane to Travers, August 4, 1942

Many thanks for your letter of July 29th advising me that the State Department has given renewed advisory approval to the appropriate American officer at Marseille, France, for the issuance of an immigration visa to Bertha Marx.

I am indeed happy to see this poor soul rescued from the persecution of the nazis.

We will remit telegraphic charges as soon as you advise me the amount.

**D. W. Corrick, Chief, Division of Accounts, Department of State,
to DeVane, August 5, 1942**

Under date of July 29, 1942, the Department upon your request, incurred an expense for one telegram to the American Consul at Marseille in regard to visa case of Bertha Marx amounting to \$2.33.

It will be appreciated if a check drawn payable to the order of the Secretary of State of the United States is forwarded to this office promptly in settlement of this account and accompanied by this bill to assure prompt credit.

Stein to Andrews, Jr., October 23, 1942⁴³

You have surely wondered why you did not hear anything from me in regard [to] how the immigration case of my mother was coming along. After having no news for a long time, I have received a letter now, dated August 11 and sent from a new address, Camp les Milles. Groupe 16. It reads: (I try to translate):

My beloved children, I am very near to our dear father now, and yet so far away. . . . [ellipses in original]. From our [window] I can see the cemetery. Maybe I will be able to obtain permission to visit Daddy's grave before we are sent away from here. Our room is just above the one where daddy lay dead, and I can not express in words how terrible [it is]. Sometimes everything seems like a nightmare and I just cannot get [out of] it. But now I know that it was destiny that I should not see you any more. Thinking of you gives me the strength to stand it as long as I will

be able to. I know that you, my dearest beloved child, have done everything in your power, but the authorization did not come! If the same should arrive today or tomorrow it may mean that I am saved, when we are sent to a place, there an emigration seems impossible.

It still is uncertain if people who have the visa authorization are allowed to stay here. Those with the visa in the passport can stay, I am sure. From 11 women of the "Hotel Levant, Room 78" 6 were picked out and I of course was among them. All I want now to do is to wish you, my dearest, dearest, children, the best of everything. My greatest desire is that you, my beloved child, be brave, do not worry or grieve. You shall enjoy your life. That you can do, if you only want to master it, even when everything seems to be crumbling. I too had spent some beautiful hours at the ocean, which I used to love so much, and today, I am glad about it. Now it is good that I have put on some weight again. I have so many things I wanted to bring you, for instance, Daddy's watch and many other things if I would only know how I could let you have them. Now I have to finish my letter. Good bye, God bless you, 1000 kisses from your mother, who loves you so much.

August 12: I just received your letter of June 8 and some hours later I received the authorization from Washington, but unfortunately only those who have the visa in the passport are allowed to stay.

This is the full contents of the letter. I tried to translate though I was not very successful in doing it, but I know you are interested in it. I have heard nothing since, except that I had a letter from a friend in Switzerland sending me [the] copy of this letter. She wrote that upon receipt of those lines she had telephoned to the head of a refugee relief organization in France, asking him to try to save my mother from being handed over to the Nazis, especially regarding that she had the authorization from Washington to enter the U.S. But it did not help and my mother had to "leave." She writes that her cousin with the visa in the passport was deported too and the Laval traitor refuses to give exit visas to people under 60 years of age who want to emigrate [to] any other country but Germany.⁴⁴

I do not know where my mother was sent and I may never be able to find out. What I know is that wherever she is she cannot write. If I should hear something, I will let you know.

Mr. Andrews, I want to take the opportunity to thank you again for everything you have done in this case. I know you have done everything in your power—everything that could be done. It just should not be that she should come. Let me assure you again of my deepest gratitude and of my appreciation for all

your sympathy and kindness. I will never forget about it as long as I live. Please assure Mr. DeVane of my gratefulness and give him my regards.

And here is one request I am having. May I have the original letters (those written in German) written by my father and mother, which you keep in your files? I do not expect to get any more letters so I would like very much to have them for memory. You could send them either over here or to my Sanford address, Rt. 2 Box 159.

The Nazis murdered my father, crippled my husband, took all my property and belongings, and I can [guess] now if my dear mother will die, starved to death, beaten to death, or kicked to death by the boot of a Nazi, I have now only one desire, that with my hate for those hunns, my university education, and my thorough knowledge of German and French languages and ways, I can be given a chance to serve this country in [its] fight for freedom and democracy.

"The Nazis murdered my father, crippled my husband, took all my property and belongings, and I can [guess] now if my dear mother will die, starved to death, beaten to death, or kicked to death by the boot of a Nazi." Lisa Stein to Charles Andrews, Jr., October 23, 1942.

(Courtesy of Charles Oscar Andrews Papers, Special and Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.)

*"Was very sorry to receive your letter . . .
and your apparent feeling that there is no possible hope of your
mother getting out of France." Charles Andrews, Jr., to Lisa Stein, October 28, 1942.
(Courtesy of Charles Oscar Andrews Papers, Special and Area Studies Collections,
George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville.)*

Andrews, Jr., to Stein, October 28, 1942

Was very sorry to receive your letter of October 23rd, quoting from your mother's letter and your apparent feeling that there is no possible hope of your mother getting out of France. I think we should also continue to hope that something will happen that will make it possible for her to come to this country.

I assure you that if there should be any developments in which we might be able to help you, do not hesitate to call upon us.

At your request, I am sending you all of the original letters which we have in our files from your parents.

DeVane to Fred [Friedrich] Stein, August 16, 1943

I thank you very much for your letter of the 11th enclosing money order in the amount of \$13.65, which we have applied on Mrs. Stein's account, for expenses advanced in connection with the above matter.

The total amount which we paid was \$33.51, and I enclose herewith a duplicate statement, with the \$13.65 credited, showing a balance due of \$19.86.

I sincerely trust that our efforts have been successful, or will be in the near future. We are indeed interested in this matter, and hope to hear that it has worked out as desired.

Stein to Andrews, Jr., August 23, 1943

...

As to my mother, am sorry to write you that I did not receive a word from her since she got deported from France.

May I mention again that I deeply appreciate everything you have done in this matter and I still hope that one day my mother will be over here and be able to thank you again in person.

Andrews, Jr., to Stein, August 25, 1943

I have your letter of the 23d and am returning herewith the receipt which you enclosed therewith. Also enclosed is a receipted bill for the entire amount of our charges against you.

I am indeed sorry that you were billed for \$19.86 in error, and this was due entirely to carelessness on the part of our office force. I am sure you know this could not have happened purposely.

Sorry to hear that you have had no further word from your mother, and join with you in hoping that you and she will be re-united.

NOTES

¹ The letters are contained in Legislative Files: Treasury Department, box 19, folder 3, Charles Oscar Andrews Papers, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL (hereafter cited as Andrews Papers). Used with permission. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not the United States Air Force or government.

² Dan J. Puckett, *In the Shadow of Hitler: Alabama's Jews, the Second World War, and the Holocaust* (Tuscaloosa, 2014), 45; Claudia Wilson Anderson, "Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson, Operation Texas, and Jewish Immigration," *Southern Jewish History* 15 (2012): 81-118.

³ Puckett, *In the Shadow of Hitler*, 2.

⁴ "Virtual Jewish World: Florida, United States," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed March 14, 2020, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/florida-jewish-history>. See also, "Jacksonville, FL," Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, accessed May 30, 2020, <https://www.isjl.org/florida-jacksonville-encyclopedia.html>, and "South Florida," Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, accessed May 30, 2020, <https://www.isjl.org/florida-south-florida-encyclopedia.html>.

⁵ Joel M. Greenberg, Seminole County Tax Collector, "Historical Information Request," e-mail to author, May 10, 2020; Roz Fuchs and Marcia Jo Zerivitz, *Kehillah: A History of Jewish Life in Greater Orlando* (Sanford, FL, 2017), 30. The author and editors thank Rachel Heimovics Braun and Marcia Jo Zerivitz for bringing this information to their attention.

⁶ Todd Bothel, Registrar, Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU, "Information Request," e-mail to author, May 11, 2020. See also, "Orlando, FL," Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, accessed May 30, 2020, <https://www.isjl.org/florida-orlando-encyclopedia.html>.

⁷ Manifest of Alien Passengers, S.S. *General Tosta*, February 15, 1940, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KDHT-KGB>. The author contacted all of the Jewish organizations in Sanford and Orlando and even the poultry farmer's association, but none of them could shed any light on the Steins. These organizations were very helpful, but apparently the Steins lived uneventful and normal lives. No death certificate is recorded for her in Florida, and the tax assessor was unable to pinpoint when they sold the chicken farm. Essentially just by chance they still retained the 1940 assessment.

⁸ "Orlando," Jewish Virtual Encyclopedia, accessed April 17, 2020, <https://www.jewish-virtuallibrary.org/orlando>.

⁹ Puckett, *In the Shadow of Hitler*, 43.

¹⁰ Fuchs and Zerivitz, *Kehillah*, 25.

¹¹ Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (Stanford, CA, 1981); Adam Rayski, *The Choice of the Jews Under Vichy: Between Submission and Resistance* (Notre Dame, IN, 2015). See also Eric T. Jennings, *Escape from Vichy: The Refugee Exodus to the French Caribbean* (Cambridge, MA, 2018).

¹² Bertha Marx, quoted in Lisa Stein to Charles O. Andrews, Jr., October 23, 1942, Andrews Papers.

¹³ Lisa Stein to Charles O. Andrews, Jr., cover letter for applications for appearance, April 25, 1942, Andrews Papers.

¹⁴ Manifest of Alien Passengers, S.S. *General Tosta*, February 15, 1940, accessed May 5, 2020, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:KDHT-KGB>.

¹⁵ Stein to Andrews, Jr., April 25, 1942, Andrews Papers.

¹⁶ "Memorandum for Hearing on Application for Visa," n.d. [probably late May 1942], Andrews Papers.

¹⁷ Donna F. Ryan, *The Holocaust & the Jews of Marseille: The Enforcement of Anti-Semitic Policies in Vichy France* (Urbana, IL, 1996), 109.

¹⁸ Meredith Hindley, *Destination Casablanca: Exile, Espionage, and the Battle for North Africa in World War II* (New York, 2017), 49.

¹⁹ Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938–1945* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1970), 136.

²⁰ "Breckinridge Long," Americans and the Holocaust, accessed December 20, 2019, <https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/americans-and-the-holocaust/personal-story/breckinridge-long>.

²¹ Rafael Medoff, *The Jews Should Keep Quiet: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and the Holocaust* (Lincoln, NE, 2019), 193; Feingold, *Politics of Rescue*, 135.

²² Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939–1945* (Detroit, 2017), 51. See also, "U.S. Policy and the Holocaust Refugee Crisis: Weighing the Evidence," National Archives, accessed December 21, 2019, <https://www.docsteach.org/activities/printactivity/us-policy-and-the-holocaust-refugee-crisis>.

²³ Mark Wischnitzer, *Visas to Freedom: The History of HIAS* (Cleveland, 1956), 168.

²⁴ Lisa Stein to Charles Andrews, Jr., December 27, 1941, Andrews Papers.

²⁵ William L. Shirer, *Berlin Diary, 1939–1941* (New York, 1941), 542 (diary entry for October 15, 1940).

²⁶ Hindley, *Destination Casablanca*, 49, 55.

²⁷ "Gurs," The Holocaust Encyclopedia, accessed December 27, 2019, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/gurs>.

²⁸ Ryan, *Holocaust & the Jews of Marseille*, 89.

²⁹ Susan Elisabeth Subak, *Rescue and Flight: American Relief Workers Who Defied the Nazis* (Lincoln, NE, 2010), 25.

³⁰ Joan E. Denman, "Senator Claude D. Pepper: Advocate of Aid to the Allies, 1939–1941," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 83 (Fall 2004): 125.

³¹ Claude Pepper Papers, Special Collections and Archives, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL.

³² Andrews, JR, to United States Senator, October 4, 1941, Andrews Papers.

³³ Senator Andrews to Avra M. Warren, October 17, 1941, Andrews Papers.

³⁴ Senator Andrews to Andrews, Jr., October 17, 1941, Andrews Papers.

³⁵ A detailed description of the problems of obtaining a steamship ticket from Lisbon to the United States is found in Marion Kaplan, "Lisbon is Sold Out!: The Daily Lives of Jewish Refugees in Portugal during World War II," Tikvah Center Working Paper 01/13 (2013), accessed May 30, 2020, <http://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/TikvahWorkingPapersArchive/WPIKaplan.pdf>.

³⁶ A detailed description of these routes is found in Subak, *Rescue and Flight*, 84-118.

³⁷ Wischnitzer, *Visas to Freedom*, 169.

³⁸ Stein to Andrews, Jr., May 6, 1942, Andrews Papers.

³⁹ Sutliff to Andrews, Jr., February 17, 1942, Andrews Papers.

⁴⁰ A. M. Warren to Stein, April 16, 1942, Andrews Papers.

⁴¹ Stein to Andrews, Jr., May 6, 1942, Andrews Papers.

⁴² Warren to Senator Andrews, March 2, 1942, Andrews Papers.

⁴³ By the time Stein received this letter, her mother had already been murdered at Auschwitz.

⁴⁴ Pierre Laval was French prime minister in the 1930s and served as a high-ranking official in the collaborationist Vichy government between 1940 and 1944, acting as its head from 1942 to 1944. With the liberation of France, he briefly fled to Spain but was arrested and executed by the de Gaulle government in 1945.