

## INTRODUCTION

The United States Escapee Program (U.S.E.P.) was established in 1952 to implement the provisions of section 101(a)(1) of the Mutual Security Act of 1951 (Public Law 165, 82d Cong.), as amended by the Kersten amendment (offered by Charles J. Kersten, Representative from Wisconsin). The Kersten amendment extended the authorization of government funds to European countries for the defense of the North Atlantic area and for the preservation of the security of the United States to include "...any selected persons who are residing in or escapees from the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, or the Communist-dominated or Communist-occupied areas of Germany and Austria, and any other countries absorbed by the Soviet Union, either to form such persons into elements of the military forces supporting the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or for other purposes, when it is similarly determined by the President that such assistance will contribute to the defense of the North Atlantic area and to the security of the United States..." The Kersten amendment was amended in the Mutual Security Act of 1953 to extend authorization of funds to assistance for Asian refugees and escapees.

U.S.E.P. provided aid to escapees from Soviet satellite countries by operating primarily through contracts with private, non-profit voluntary agencies, furnishing the funds used by the voluntary agencies to care for escapees, integrate them into the population of the countries that first gave them asylum, or resettle them in other countries. The individual resettlement and/or integration projects were controlled by U.S.E.P. through the contracts negotiated with the agencies.

Refugee assistance and the immigration laws of the United States attracted considerable attention from Congress in the 1950's, and Subcommittee No. 1 of the House Judiciary Committee, which has special jurisdiction over immigration and nationality matters, began in 1957 an investigation of U.S.E.P. and government contributions to voluntary agencies involved in aiding refugees. This investigation was part of an overall examination of the effort of the United States to render assistance to refugees since the end of the Second World War. As part of this examination, Subcommittee Chairman, Francis E. Walter, Representative from Pennsylvania, undertook, in November, 1959, to survey services rendered and monies expended by the various voluntary agencies for refugee aid since 1945.

The subcommittee, after examining U.S.E.P. and its work, made recommendations concerning both the program and its administration (H.Rept. 1066, 87th Cong., 1st Sess.). It also made recommendations concerning the section of the Mutual Security Act which U.S.E.P. was created to implement (H.Rept. 1369, 87th Cong., 2d Sess.).

The records of the subcommittee investigation, which amount to approximately 1 cubic foot, are not complete. They are part of Record Group 233, Records of the United States House of Representatives. Authorization to examine the records must be obtained from the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

RECORDS OF SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 1 OF THE  
HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE - INVESTIGATION  
OF THE UNITED STATES ESCAPEE PROGRAM  
(U.S.E.P.)

GENERAL RECORDS RELATING TO U.S.E.P. Oct., 1957 - May, 1962

1 in.

1

Consists primarily of correspondence of State Department officials and other individuals interested in the investigation with Chairman Walter and Walter M. Besterman, Legislative Assistant of the Subcommittee, and records relating to refugees in general and U.S.E.P. in particular. Included are Subcommittee records on U.S.E.P. caseload; copies of various Public Laws and Executive Orders pertaining to directly or indirectly to U.S.E.P.; extra copies of questionnaire on refugee aid sent, with accompanying letter, to independent agencies engaged in refugee assistance by Chairman Walter in November, 1959; copy of address delivered on March 18, 1960, by John W. Haynes, then Administrator of Security and Consular Affairs for the State Department; April 30, 1962 issue of the State Department Bulletin, containing an address made on April 3, 1962, by Michel Cieplinski, then Acting Administrator of Security and Consular Affairs. Arranged chronologically.

RECORDS RELATING TO REFUGEE ASSISTANCE RENDERED BY INDEPENDENT,  
VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, 1945-1959. Nov., 1959 - Jan., 1960.

2 in.

2

Include correspondence of Chairman Walter with heads of various voluntary agencies regarding the Refugee Aid Survey of Subcommittee No. 1; survey questionnaires completed and returned by voluntary agencies; Annual Report of the Executive Director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees for the year ending June 30, 1961; Annual Audit of the U.S. Committee for Refugees for the year July 1, 1960-June 30, 1961; November, 1961 issue of the U.S. Committee for Refugees Newsletter; copy of address delivered on December 5, 1961 by Richard R. Brown, then Director of the Office of Refugees and Migration Affairs of the State Department. The file also contains a Subcommittee compilation of U. S. Government contributions to various voluntary agencies for refugee aid between 1956 and 1959. Arranged, on the whole, by agency.

RECORDS RELATING TO U.S.E.P. SUBMITTED TO SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 1 BY  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE. 1959 - 1960.

10 in.

3

This series consists of Public Laws and Executive Orders pertaining to the establishment of U.S.E.P.; copies of correspondence

between President Truman and Averill Harriman, Director of Mutual Security, which led to the creation of U.S.E.P.; regulations and instructions concerning the operations of U.S.E.P.; number of refugees resettled or integrated into country which first granted them asylum; records regarding U.S.E.P. relations with countries of first asylum; records (including sample contracts) illustrative of U.S.E.P. arrangements with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (I.C.E.M.) and various independent, voluntary. There is also an explanation of U.S.E.P. relations with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Arranged by subject according to summary submitted by State Department.