THE PRESENT SITUATION ON IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION

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Introduction

IMMIGRATION to the United States has been a matter of concern to all social agencies from their inception. As our concept of social welfare has broadened from the initial palliative of food for the hungry and a dose of medicine for the sick, so it has grown to recognize the immigrant as a potential source of strength for the nation. His need for aid in immigration and adjustment is a legitimate social need. Properly planned aid, we know, pays quick dividends for the community, for the general public and for our total economy.

In the early days—when the great American tradition of haven for the oppressed was nurtured—the immigrant's strong arms and stout heart were a welcome contribution to the rapid settlement and building of the country. Until 1875, there were no immigration laws as such, although there had been passed laws dealing with naturalization of aliens. A few states had attempted legislation to regulate settlement of immigrants within their respective jurisdictions, but in 1876 the U. S. Supreme Court declared all such state laws unconstitutional.

Background

With the beginning of development of our industrial civilization, an awakening public concern with health and welfare standards was reflected in the first bill of "exclusion" passed by Congress in 1875. This bill excluded known prostitutes and criminals from the country. Legislation over the ensuing 40 years kept pace with medical and social advances by adding certain contagious and "loathsome" diseases and anti-social acts to the list for exclusion.

The important fact about our immigration laws, until after the first World War, is that legal exclusion was based almost entirely on the merits of the individual case. Our laws were exclusive, but they were not restrictive. The major exception was the racist "Chinese Exclusion Act," passed in 1878.

In 1917, the many immigration regulations were codified in a single immigration law which has since served as the basic immigration law. In addition to setting forth the many bases for exclusion of individuals, the law also clarified the status and rights of aliens by establishing reasons and procedures for deportation. In general, while the burden of proof that he *is not deportable* was on the alien, the courts, in one ruling after another, have in the past shown deep concern for protection of the alien's rights. I do not wish to dwell on this particular aspect of the immigration process beyond underscoring the obvious responsibility of our national and community agencies during this period prior to citizenship.

Quota System and National Origins Law—1924

The whole basis of our immigration laws was radically shifted, from 1921 on, in a period of vast world unrest following on the heels of the first World War. The Immigration Act of 1924, which still governs our immigration policy, not only limited the total number of immigrants to 154,000 a year, but set up a system of pre-selection and restriction on a racial basis, only thinly-veiled by being called a "quota" system. Under this law, the total of 154,000 is allocated among the countries of the world by a formula which favors the countries of northern and western Europe at the expense of the others. The system is rigid and invariable. If a given country does not use up its entire quota in a certain year, the unused portion cannot be carried over to another year or transferred to another country. As a result, total immigration has actually been only 38 percent of the number that was theoretically admissible.

All of us here will remember well the heartaches and horrors of the 1930's as we labored to rescue fellow Jews from the gathering storm in Europe and so often found ourselves blocked by restrictive quotas. It is fruitless to dwell on the many who might have been saved; on the skills and devoted talents forever lost to America by its own restrictive laws. But in these troubled times, we should, at least, determine to ameliorate these undemocratic laws which have barred so many from our shores.

It is important to note that within the restrictive scope of the immigration laws, there have been from time to time amendments which served to lessen individual and family hardships. At the same time, the amendments, over the years, also bred innumerable inconsistencies. From the legal point of view, one amendment occasionally had the result of almost nullifying another, unintentionally. The law, for instance, differs from one section to another in setting the legal age for qualification as an adult. In one place, it is 18; in others, 21.

Public Interest in Immigration Laws

The general public was not particularly concerned with our immigration laws, and the concurrent provisions relating to the rights and status of aliens, up to and through the last war. The laws themselves were so complicated that the average citizen could not possibly understand them. But there was a growing concern on the part of social agencies, and certainly on the part of the Jewish social agencies, that the immigration laws seemed to have been frozen on an anti-social and anti-democratic level against the long-range interests and the general social standards of our country.

Perhaps the first public awakening to the whole question of immigration and alien control came in 1940 with the widespread publicity given to the Alien Registration Act. This Act, incidentally, was fairly well administered, and probably served to allay public suspicion of aliens later when the United States actually was at war. Certainly it is a fact that the neighborhood persecutions of aliens so common in the first World War were not repeated in the last war. Hopefully, some credit for this can also go to a generally deeper social understanding among Americans.

Refugee Problem After the War

The end of the European holocaust brought home the problem of refugees, and fostered some understanding in the general public of the need for offering asylum on the mass basis actually denied by the laws. Many Americans began to learn, at first hand, what our immigration laws actually were. America, the traditional home of the oppressed both economically and politically, they learned, had in legal effect closed its doors on most of the refugees.

Truman Directive

President Truman courageously cut some red tape with his December, 1945, "Directive" which accelerated the rate of immigration, and favored DP's, without actually changing the basic law. The "Directive" set up facilitative services abroad to speed visa issuance. More important, it provided for the so-called "Corporate Affidavit," which, in essence, recognized and legalized the interest and responsibility of voluntary social agencies *vis-a-vis* government and immigrant. The social agency was no longer merely a tie between the prospective immigrant and an *individual* American but a governing factor in the immigration of the alien, irrespective of individual sponsorship, responsibility, etc. For the first time in our country's history, it became possible for social agencies, with government sanction, to accept responsibility for immigration and resettlement of newcomers, and plan accordingly with local communities.

The Truman Directive, and the effective work of the social agencies, created a background against which it was possible to conduct a campaign of public education leading first to the passage of the Displaced Persons Act in 1948, and then to the elimination of most of its discriminatory and restrictive provisions by amendment in 1950.

Displaced Persons Act

It is an interesting commentary on the development of social consciousness in the general public that, once awakened to the problem, there has been only sporadic opposition to the mass immigration resulting from the Displaced Persons Act.

And the DP's amply repaid America for her hospitality. Thousands of them risked their lives on the battlefield and many of them made the supreme sacrifice to help bring victory to the land of their adoption.

That we were the first to have the atomic bomb is due to our generosity in opening our doors to displaced persons. It was a DP—Dr. Einstein—who first suggested to President Roosevelt that we initiate a project for development of the bomb. Many other refugee scientists who had been driven out of Europe by Hitler and Mussolini worked on the project and helped to make it a success.

In many other ways, these newcomers contributed to our war effort.

Thousands of American airmen and sailors, who were forced to take to the rafts on the Pacific, escaped a horrible death from thirst by use of the "belly" still which distills drinkable water from the sea. That still was invented by a refugee scientist.

One of the great bottlenecks in the early days of the war was the need for antennae for tanks and walkie-talkies. At that time, these antennae were being cut from cold steel. A Viennese metallurgist developed a plan for use of powdered metal and in a few weeks, from a small plant in Yonkers, he was supplying our entire armed forces.

On the battlefield, in the laboratory and in the shop, the men and women who, after incredible sufferings abroad, had been given haven in this country, demonstrated their gratitude and loyalty by helping America win the war.

The mass immigration of the DP's has served to awaken the public and our legislators to the necessity of codifying and liberalizing our basic immigration law.

At the same time, the ramified technicalities of immigration law and procedure have made it difficult for most persons to follow what is going on and to understand the long-term implications of some suggested revisions. No one would disagree with the necessity for making our immigration laws compatible with the needs of national security, yet it is imperative that our anxiety on this score should not be permitted to result in the continuation of the negative aspects of the present laws and, in some provisions, a worsening of the legislation.

At least one step ahead of public interest in immigration—and probably a determining factor in favorable reaction to the newcomers—has gone the organized planning of our social agencies to make each immigrant an integrated part of his community as quickly as possible. Unquestionably, the favorable reaction of the American people to DP immigration has been heightened by the personal experience of seeing the "New" American arrive in his community and being speedily aided in adjusting to the American scene and mores long before the end of the five-year period when he could actually become a citizen.

The DP Act of 1948 attempted to follow the pattern of our basic selective immigration laws by also setting a selective basis for the displaced persons. The original DP law set quotas on farmers and also on countries of origin. The fallacies of this kind of pre-selection were quickly obvious on a mass immigration basis. In fact, it simply did not work. The amended Act of June, 1950, recognized that the method was impractical by eliminating these pre-selective conditions.

Job and Housing Assurance

In passing, and incidentally, there has been criticism of the Act for its requirement that each displaced person must be guaranteed housing and a job in the United States before he is granted a visa. However, it is important to recognize that this particular provision is actually a practical liberalization of former immigration requirements. Previously, it was necessary for some individual to prove that he was financially able to support the prospective immigrant for the five-year period preceding citizenship. On a mass basis, such a requirement was obviously impossible, particularly for those many DP's who had neither relatives nor friends in this country, and who constituted the bulk of the refugees desiring to settle here. The guarantee of job and housing—which is quite broadly interpreted for accredited agencies such as United Service for New Americans—is in effect a legislative recognition of the social responsibility of our community agencies. It legally accepts their promise to aid "X" immigrant as against the previous requirement that John Doe prove he had enough money to support Richard Roe, in case Richard could not support himself once he got here.

First Hearing on Revisions of Basic Laws

Two years ago, the Congress of the United States decided that our immigra-

tion laws needed a thorough airing and going over. In the face of developing social trends, changed world conditions, the growth of America as a world power, and international concern for the movements of peoples, the basic immigration laws of the '20s presented some archaic and confused concepts. Hearings were held at the time, and then put in the deep freezer for seemingly more pressing problems. They have been taken out of the freezer by the 82nd Congress, but the world moves so fast today that the liberalizing concept of two years ago has again undergone a metamorphosis.

Democratic and Social Concepts Desirable

Before I discuss specifically the legislation before us today, which is wrapped up in something called the McCarran-Walter Omnibus Immigration Bill, I would like to point up a few major positive points on which I think we can agree, as Americans, as socially-conscious individuals, and, incidentally, as Jews. It seems to me that we, as many other troubled persons in America today, are conscious of a gulf between precepts and practices; between what we say and what we do. The Voice of America calls for refugees behind the "Iron Curtain" to flee to the haven of the democracies; then our laws negate the promise offered. We, as social workers, have a particular responsibility to take leadership in breaching the gulf.

In a practicing democracy, which we aspire to be, these should be the bases of immigration legislation:

1. Non-discrimination on grounds of race, religion or ancestry. (This, of course, is basic.)
2. Recognition that we are big enough to absorb the immigrant and that his strength adds to our strength.
3. Recognition that the immigrant is not a "commodity" to be traded on the labor market, but a human being whose skills and talents—and those of his children—cannot be prejudged.
4. Consciousness of the existing threat to our national security, but a realistic awareness that it would be a tragic error to yield our democratic concepts and basic civil liberties in exchange for a non-existent shield such as the magical thorn-hedge which protected the Sleeping Beauty or the wall of fire which protected the sleeping Brunhilde.

The present controversy over immigration policy is not new in our nation's history. If we examine the *Congressional Record,* we note that on one occasion a Congressman from Massachusetts stood on the floor of the House and stated that a liberal immigration policy was suitable when the country was young and unsettled, but now that it was mature and fully developed, immigration should be restricted. That Congressman was Harrison Otis, and the year was *1797*.

We must face the fact that there are two basic, but conflicting tendencies today, legislatively, publicly, and often within ourselves, as individuals. The worsening of tension between the Western Democracies and the Soviet Union has created a sentiment for controls, both internally and in terms of immigration, while at the same time, we are concerned with the imperative necessity of "selling" the democratic way of life abroad.

These tendencies helped to stir the

sentiment for liberalized legislation. At the same time, they stirred other legislators to propose increased stringency of the laws—again internally and in terms of immigration.

Another striking inconsistency appears when we consider the case of the so-called Mexican "wetbacks." These are aliens who enter the country illegally from Mexico, primarily to seek employment on the ranches and farms of the Southwest. Due to the demand for cheap labor in that area, the influx of thousands of these wetbacks every year is generally winked at, and those very Congressmen and Senators who are most vociferous in condemning the immigrant who comes in from Europe are highly indignant when an attempt is made to cut off the flow of illegal immigration from Mexico into their constituencies.

"Omnibus" Bill Introduced

In the spring of 1950, Sen. McCarran introduced an omnibus immigration and naturalization bill, S.3455, which purported to reflect the views and considerations that were brought out at the hearing two years earlier. No action was taken on this bill at last year's session of Congress, so that when the 82nd Congress opened, Sen. McCarran reintroduced the bill under a new number, S.716, with a number of changes, some of a more liberal nature. Meanwhile, however, during the summer of 1950, some portions of S.3455 had been incorporated into the controversial *Internal Security Act of 1950* and have thus already become part of the law of the land. Parallel with the introduction of S.716 in the Senate, an almost identical bill, H.R. 2379—though with several more liberal features—was introduced by Rep. Walter in the House. Finally, a third omnibus bill sponsored by Rep. Celler (H.R. 2816), and more liberal in many respects than H.R. 2379, was also introduced in the House.

Joint Congress Hearings

In March, 1951, joint Congressional public hearings were held on the McCarran and Walter bills. Again, at these hearings, numerous private organizations of all kinds presented testimony, pointing out the faults and dangers of the proposed measures.

But we would be indulging in self-deception if we did not point out, at the same time, that some of the testimony concerned itself only with some single and specific provision, without comment on the total bills. Some of the agencies and individuals testifying were primarily concerned with one piece of the proposed legislation that happened to affect them directly. In a few cases, they were willing to accept every other negative aspect, given the one section they cared about; in many cases, the seeming lack of concern for the total bill was actually the result of total ignorance of the immigration problem as a whole. Testimony on the bills, thus far, points up the necessity for an informed opinion and for an aroused concern for every aspect of the pending legislation. This information and this concern must be manifest *now,* inasmuch as whatever standards are adopted as a result of these bills will likely remain on our American statute books for many years, perhaps even for decades. The *Immigration Act of 1924* has remained on our statutes for a full quarter-century, and has thereby affected, directly and indirectly, in countless crucial ways, the lives of millions of human beings.

Effect of the Internal Security Act on Immigration

Here is one of the provisions of that portion of the *Internal Security Act of 1950* which dealt with immigration.

It excluded those who *at any time* had been members of the Communist or other totalitarian party. But this blanket prohibition was quickly shown to be unworkable in its application. The letter of the law, as applied to the immigrants by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, created complete confusion and a practical reversal of the desire of Congress to eliminate mainly actual totalitarians of the left. Not only was the right also excluded, but all those who had either erred in early days or had been compelled by certain circumstances to become members of the proscribed groups, and had since recanted in entire good faith. The principle of "permanent guilt" established by this provision of the Act was so obviously inequitable and unworkable that the Congress, in March, 1951, was compelled to amend the law to permit the admission of former "nominal" members of all totalitarian groups.

And now we are confronted with an even more comprehensive measure—which is, in effect, an anti-immigration measure—the proposed McCarran-Walter Omnibus Immigration and Naturalization Bill. These bills (S.716 and H.R.2379) would tighten our immigration, deportation, naturalization and expatriation laws, while showing little regard for civil rights or constitutional principles of protection for the individual. The Walter bill—H.R.2379—is somewhat more liberal than the Senate bill, although both contain many of the same basically restrictive provisions. For the purpose of this discussion I shall primarily examine the Senate bill (S. 716), since it would take hours to analyze the individual distinctions between the provisions of these two bills.

S.716 would set up a system of priorities within each quota, whereby 50 percent would be assigned to aliens of specialized skills and training, 30 percent to parents of American citizens, and 20 percent to spouses and children of alien residents. Only the remaining *ten percent* could be devoted to *general* immigration; all unused portions of the ninety percent set aside for preferred groups would be lost. In effect, this would mean that many otherwise worthy and desirable immigrants would either be forever excluded or would have to wait endless, weary years for entry visas.

As a matter of fact, the "selective" method of former immigration laws never went as far as this. Some of the most conspicuous contributions to our nation have been made by immigrants who could not prove such specialized skills and training as S.716 would now demand. Nor does the bill recognize that a belief in the equal worth and dignity of the individual is one of the foundation stones of American democracy. About sixty years ago, Irving Berlin, at the age of five, was brought here with his family from Eastern Europe. I am sure that no immigration inspector had the capacity to look at that group, with their strange language, queer garb and foreign mannerisms, and forecast that among them was a child who would write the songs that America would sing in war and in peace over a period of nearly forty years.

There are certain major provisions in the bill which I propose to detail for you. But first, I want to mention a few minor provisions—minor in that actually few persons may specifically be affected by them—but important in that they highlight a general retrogression from present legislation.

Some Minor Provisions of S.716

1. The bill provides that the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization and the administrator of the Bureau of Passports, Visas, Security and Consular Affairs shall be native-born citizens of the United States. No such provisions exist in our country for any other office excepting that of the presidency of the United States. As I am sure you are all aware, the latter provision was a matter of historical expedience. It is against American tradition and experience thus to imply second-class citizenship for government office.

2. The proposed bill would wipe out all exceptions to the literacy requirements for immigration. As of now, such requirements can be waived for persons who are victims of religious and racial persecution, and also for close relatives of American citizens where application of the requirements would forever prevent reunion of a family group.

3. The bill would wipe out a section of the 1924 law which permitted the entry of ministers and professors outside of the quota of their country of origin. The 1924 measure recognized the value to the United States of immigrants in these professions. Under the proposed bill, ministers and professors would merely be given "priority" on a quota

4. Discretion of the Attorney General to re-admit a resident alien following a temporary absence abroad is severely limited and proscribed by the new bill, which provides re-admission only for an alien with "seven consecutive years of a lawful, unrelinquished domicile," who is not deemed otherwise inadmissible for political reasons. The present latitude given the Attorney General to exercise discretion based on individual cases is wiped out.

I might cite numerous other sections of the bill, where the omission, or the occasional addition, of one word serves primarily to tighten the law and restrict any authorized official from using discretionary judgment. For instance, Section 101 (e) provides that "the giving, loaning, or promising of support or of money or any other thing of value for any purpose to any organization shall be *conclusively* presumed to constitute affiliation therewith. . . ." The inclusion here of the single word *conclusively* has the legal effect of denying an individual alien the opportunity to show what the alleged facts might be and to prove that he is innocent of any intent to "affiliate" with a proscribed organization. In other words, no matter how innocent, or through what error and misunderstanding the money or other thing of value was given, the word *conclusively* here prevents explanation and the exercise of discretion by U. S. officials.

Major Provisions of Bill

There are three major categories under which the laws relating to newcomers can be divided. And I would like to give you some major points of the proposed McCarran bill under these categories, namely, 1. Immigration. 2. Resident alien status. 3. Deportation.

1. *Immigration.* It is proper to point, first, to one important advance of the new proposals over present immigration law, although the new proposal is by no means all it should be. Nonetheless, it does go a long way to wipe off our books some of the flagrantly racist sections of the present law.

Racist Concept Partially Eliminated

The new bill actually eliminates reference to certain racial groups as ineligible for naturalization and hence, admission. Quotas for all the Asian countries, although small, are incorporated in the bill, thus recognizing their eligibility for immigration. However—and this holds true only for Asians—the country of birth is not the determining factor for any Asiatic with 50 percent or more of "Asian" blood. In other words, the concept of judging by ancestry—or race—is maintained. Hence, a British citizen, born in London, of a British father and Japanese mother would be allocated to the Japanese quota, and if the small quota of 100 such persons per year were exhausted, he could not enter the United States at all as a legal immigrant.

Similarly, a limit of 100 per year is set on the number of persons "born in any one colony or other dependent area" which is chargeable to the quota of the governing country. The real practical effect of this provision is to limit immigration from Jamaica, Trinidad and other West Indian colonies without actually putting a basically racist concept into so many words.

New Restrictions Within Quotas

The *new quota restrictions* provided in S.716 can actually reduce immigration drastically. The majority of witnesses and organizations testifying on the subject before the Senate Sub-Committee hearings urged that the prevailing national quotas be made more flexible, and that recognition be given to national need and humanitarian considerations by allocating unused quotas to all such immigrants.

S.716 does exactly the opposite by superimposing a new quota system on the old to establish iron-clad preference categories as we have seen. Thus, 50 percent or more of immigrants *within existing quotas* would have to be certified by the Attorney General as urgently needed in the United States "because of high education, technical training, specialized experience, exceptional ability. . . ." and so forth.

30 percent of each quota would go to parents of adult United States citizens. It would seem unlikely, on the face of it, that 46,200—or 30 percent of the total 154,000 immigrants allowed annually—would have adult children who are citizens of the United States.

20 percent of each quota would go to spouses or children of aliens who are permanent residents of the United States —again, this round figure of 30,000 seems an unlikely estimate.

The remaining 10 percent of quota is all that would be left for immigrants not falling in the three major preferred classes. And this 10 percent is fixed, regardless of whether the other 90 percent has been utilized.

It is obvious that such a provision would serve, as it was undoubtedly intended, to reduce immigration to a trickle.

Added Grounds for Exclusion

Fourteen new grounds for exclusion of immigrants are set up in S.716, some of which I have already discussed. Most important of the others is the provision to bar aliens convicted of alleged felonies in their own countries, even though those countries are totalitarian and the so-called felonies would not be considered crimes under American law. For example, a Jew convicted by some Nazi court, theoretically not a political matter, and thereby incurring criminal penalties, would be forever excluded. There is, in addition, considerable doubt about the bill's interpretation of such phrases as "moral turpitude" and a variety of physical and mental conditions held to render the newcomer inadmissible, or deportable.

Resident Alien Status and Deportation

Social agencies have a special responsibility, and play a significant role, in the newcomer's life during the five-year period prior to citizenship. All of the aid which we strive to give to the newcomer and the community in speeding his adjustment through social and cultural integration can be wasted if we fail to understand the present law and its application. Certainly, if we fail to understand the implications of the proposed law in this regard, our work will be less effective and far less productive from every humanitarian and social standpoint.

Statute of Limitations Abolished

Let me point out two important general provisions of the Senate bill which govern all the other specific provisions. The Statute of Limitations—a principle very basic to American liberty and jurisprudence—would be abolished in relation to aliens. At any time during the life of a naturalized citizen, a decision made earlier in his favor could be upset and reversed. Further, he could be subjected to deportation on grounds newly-established by the bill (and presumably succeeding bills) which were not a part of immigration legislation at the time of his entry. He would never be free from fear and never secure in his proudly-acquired citizenship.

Court Review Limited

To compound the wrong, he could also be deprived of court protection in deportation proceedings. The Senate bill in effect removes immigration and nationality cases from the jurisdiction of the courts except through a writ of *habeas corpus,* and then only with respect to questions of law. The courts may not in any form review determinations of fact or the exercise of discretionary authority by administrative officers. It is clear that tremendous power is here placed in a few hands without the right to protect against administrative error and abuse.

If the applicant is excluded, he has no recourse. If he is admitted, the government can reopen the case regardless of the number of years which have elapsed or of his conduct during that period. There is no machinery to bring about uniformity in applying the law throughout the world nor is there any check against incompetence or dishonesty on the part of immigration officials.

Added Grounds for Deportation

There are a good many specific additions to immigration legislation which broaden the grounds for deportation and narrow the rights of the alien and naturalized citizen. But Mr. Greenleigh is going to interpret these for you, since they most specifically affect the work of the community social agencies concerned with the welfare of newcomers.

"Omnibus" Bill Should Be Opposed As Now Drafted

It seems clear that under the guise of codifying our immigration laws and making certain improvements in administrative procedures, the McCarran bill in

many respects would actually turn back the clock. Its passage would have the practical effect of barring the door to many deserving immigrants; it would serve notice on the rest of the world that we do not actually mean what we say; it would turn into stone the bread of compassion which we offer the oppressed throughout the world.

What should be done in this critical junction?

First, of course, we must oppose the passage of the pending bill, as now proposed, and do everything in our power to alert the people to the viciousness of some of its provisions.

But this approach alone is a negative one. We must go further and seek positive remedies to revamp our immigration system so that it becomes just and fair, and in consonance with our traditions of hospitality and democracy.

Objectives for New Legislation

An immediate objective should be an amendment to the law which would permit the pooling of unused quotas. Under such a provision, if any nation in a given year fails to use its entire quota, the unused portion would *not* be lost, but would be placed in a pool and made available for those countries whose visas are oversubscribed. Reasonable administration of such provisions would permit the annual entry into this country of the full quota of 154,000 immigrants whose admission is theoretically provided for but who in fact never come.

But that is for the near term. Our ultimate objective must be the complete elimination of any provision in our immigration statutes by which preference is given or barriers raised on account of race, color, religion or national origin.

Of course, the present standards of health and character would be maintained and provisions for screening against criminal tendencies and subversiveness would be continued.

At a time when manpower is of such vital importance and when our own birth rate is falling, we are foolish to exclude so many worthy men and women who, morally and physically, would add to our strength as a nation.

Informed Public and Community Leaders Necessary

I should like to impress on all of you the necessity of going back to your communities with an understanding of what is now before Congress and the kind of legislation we earnestly desire and must seek for our own strength as a nation and as democratically-minded individuals. The influential citizens who make up the boards of directors of our many social agencies need to have the kind of information I hope we are giving you in this session. They need to understand the basic concepts of immigration which make it possible to recognize quickly the desirable as against the restrictive.

Through our various national agencies, geared to the task of evaluating immigration legislation and transmitting these evaluations to you quickly, you—and your community—will be kept in close touch with what is going on. It is up to you to let your community leaders know the whole story, so that when responsive action is called for, it will be forthcoming quickly, and from informed community sources which can command the respect and prompt response of our legislators.

This involves more than the matter

of justice and decent treatment for the immigrant. It involves more than the manpower, the skills and the talents which our country so badly needs. For we are concerned here with the very soul of America. We are endeavoring to eliminate the conflict between the great principles for which Americans have fought and died and the vicious, undemocratic concepts upon which our immigration system is based.

Let us resolve that we shall not relax our efforts until no man is barred or given preference as an immigrant because of his race, his creed or his national origin. Only when we have removed all such gaps between our professed principles and our actual practices can we hope to win the minds and hearts of men everywhere in the struggle for freedom and equality throughout the world.