

Man Power f. U.S. 6208/49/4.

SECRET

November 19th, 1941.

Dear Nevile,

I enclose a copy of a letter which Miss Haslett of the Ministry of Labour has written to the Home Secretary.

The background of this letter is as follows. In September a young man named Ordway, who is an undergraduate at Harvard, came to see me with a very warm recommendation from Hume Wrong of the Canadian Legation. He put forward an idea that a group of undergraduates, mainly from the eastern universities, should be formed to go to England to do civilian defence work there, to work on dock construction, or to do anything else that would be useful; he also wished them to be able to stay on there after the war and assist in the work of reconstruction. Ordway impressed both Hume Wrong and me as being a first-rate young man, and we thought his idea worth pursuing not only because of the good work which he might do, but because of the excellent effect on Anglo-American relations which such ideas might have if put into practice. I gave Cribbett of the R.A.F. Delegation here a note about these proposals, as he was just going back to England to discuss the whole question of man power. He took this note with him, and has told me since his return that a certain amount of work has been done on it in London. The Service Departments are supposed to be examining the possibility of forming a non-skilled section of the Civilian Technical Corps to take in these people, and

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See - 148

3358/1/41

Markham at the Ministry of Labour is believed to be investigating the possibility of their employment in other spheres. Progress of a kind is thus being made, but it does not seem to be going very fast. Miss Haslett saw these papers when she was here, and wrote to the Home Secretary, and also to Sir Frank Tribe in the Ministry of Labour, suggesting that they should follow up the question. She has also put forward the idea that the proposals might be brought into relation with the Anglo-American personnel scheme referred to in Foreign Office despatch No. 727 (A7296/7296/45) of September 23rd.

I have written to Ordway from time to time, telling him how things are going, and Jack Wheeler Bennett is going to get in touch with him when he next goes to Harvard. But I am afraid we have not been able to give him much encouragement so far. His ideas are, of course, slightly half-baked, but I think nevertheless there is a lot in them and that if we could get them into effect fairly soon, before the enthusiasm begins to cool, it would be all to the good. Conant has given a vague and general blessing.

Yours ever,

(SGD) W. G. HAYTER