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DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6  
NLJ 97-333  
By ia, NARA Date 9-18-98

Friday, May 17, 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Jews in Poland

*susp  
sent to Pres  
5/18/68 - 11:30 AM*

In the memorandum at Tab A, Nick Katzenbach recommends:

1. You authorize Attorney General Clark to be prepared to extend parole to Jewish Poles, and
2. You authorize Katzenbach to tell American-Jewish leaders in confidence that we are prepared to receive Jewish refugees from Poland without regard to quota limitations.

Parole action may not be necessary -- as current refugee provisions will probably enable us to give visas to any Polish Jews who can get out of that country. We have had some Congressional criticism of parole, and would prefer not to use this authority unless necessary. (Parole reduces delay and the need for supporting personal documentation. Technically, it could by-pass legal requirements on health, criminal records, Communist affiliation, etc. -- but the State Department's intention is to require security checks and admit only Polish Jews who would otherwise be eligible as refugees.)

As drafted, Nick Katzenbach's memorandum would have you authorize parole for "refugees from religious persecution in Poland." If there were a renewed attack on the Catholic Church, this could apply to Catholics as well as Jews. There is also a theoretical question whether such a parole should apply to Russian Jews or persecuted religious groups elsewhere. In any event this all represents contingency planning.

If a parole action were taken, it would, of course, be violently denounced by the Polish Government and perhaps also be criticized by some Polish-Americans. Nevertheless, Ambassador Gronouski agrees with the arguments which override these considerations.

Essentially, the argument for action now is:

- to show the Jewish leadership in America that we are prepared to move; and
- to head off a repetition of the Jews' deeply felt conviction that the U.S. Government failed to give visas in time to the desperately persecuted European Jews in the Nazi era.



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I recommend you approve Nick Katzenbach's recommendations on the following understanding:

a. The Attorney General will extend parole only when refugee and other provisions of legislation prove inadequate to the need;

b. Persons coming into the U.S. on parole will have had security checks and would be eligible under normal refugee provisions, and

c. The parole action will technically apply to both Jewish and non-Jewish refugees from racial and religious persecution in Poland.

W. W. Rostow

Katzenbach recommendations approved \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

Speak to me \_\_\_\_\_

ND:gg

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