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Your file

Notre référence

Our file

Nuestra referencia

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# FOR INFORMATION ONLY

June 4, 1975

Rev. T.E. Floyd Honey  
General Secretary  
Canadian Council of Churches  
40 St. Clair Ave. E.  
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M9

Dear Rev. Honey:

Re: Special Chilean Immigration Program - Argentina

You will recall that during our last meeting on April 30 I undertook to coordinate a reply concerning your offer to send a representative to Argentina to assist the Embassy with the refugee program.

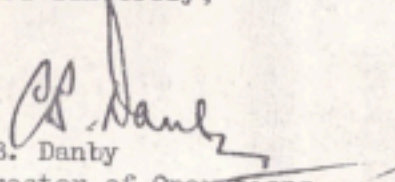
I have now explored the matter with all concerned. As a result, I wish to advise you that while there is no objection in principle to the presence of a representative from your organization, the consensus is that he could probably not increase the effectiveness of the operation through a liaison role, which I believe is what you had in mind. You appreciate, I am sure, that the present Chilean refugee situation in Argentina is significantly different than was the situation in Chile when you sent representatives to help get the prisoner-release program launched. That situation was very delicate and required a good deal of liaison with voluntary agencies and Government officials, as well as with family members of the confined applicants. Under those circumstances your Spanish-speaking representatives were able to play a most helpful role which was much appreciated by our personnel.

In Argentina, however, at the present time the situation is less complex and under control. There is little need to negotiate with the Argentine Government; Embassy liaison contacts with the UNHCR office in Argentina are frequent and excellent. Most, if not all, of the bona fide refugees under UN protection are well aware that they are eligible to apply for immigration to Canada and that their application will be given expeditious consideration. Processing these applications to determine whether the persons involved can meet statutory requirements will inevitably take a period of time. Providing more liaison capacity or even more immigration officials will not eliminate that factor (because we must rely on local facilities, e.g. for medical examinations).

Under these circumstances, it is the Embassy's view, with which we concur, that placing one of your representatives in Argentina at this time is unnecessary and unlikely to increase the ability of the Embassy

to process refugee applications. Any of your representatives who may wish to visit the Embassy to obtain information about the program will of course be welcome.

Yours sincerely,



C.B. Danby  
Director of Operations  
Foreign Service Region

