

**THE EMIGRATION OF SUDETEN GERMAN
SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO CANADA IN 1939**

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The surrender of the border territories of Czechoslovakia after the Munich Agreement further worsened the refugee situation in Europe. More than 150,000 people fled the occupied territories and sought refuge in the Czech interior.¹ Among the refugees were many Sudeten Germans, who had opposed the policies of Konrad Henlein and his Sudeten German Party, and also many Jews. The “new” Czecho-Slovak state could not accept and productively settle these people on account of economic realities. Initial assistance was provided by Czech volunteer organizations such as the Czecho-Slovak Red Cross, České srdce, Charita, and Sokol. Czecho-Slovak Government assistance to refugees was organized through the Committee for Refugee Assistance and through the Institute for Refugee Welfare.² Essential to their activities was help from charitable organizations abroad. Among them, the most important was the Lord Mayor of London Fund for Czech Refugees founded by London Mayor, Sir Harry Twyford.³ It was obvious that the only permanent solution was to arrange for the emigration of endangered persons to other countries. The history of

¹ Radvanovský, Z., K otázce uprchlíků z pohraničí českých zemí po Mnichově, in *Historie okupovaného pohraničí, Ústí nad Labem 1998*, pp. 5–32; Raška, F. D., Uprchlícké tábory v Čechách a na Moravě po mnichovském diktátu, *Soudobé dějiny* 4/2001, pp. 732–745.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 737–738.

³ Public Record Office (PRO) FO. 371, 24087, W11591/977/48 Final report of the Lord Mayor's Czech Refugee Fund, July 1939.

emigration from Czecho-Slovakia has been studied in greatest detail by Peter Heumos.⁴ Recently, a meticulous account of British help for Czecho-Slovak refugees was published by Hana Velecká.⁵

Sudeten German Social Democrats formed a special group of refugees from Czecho-Slovakia. Their emigration was organized by the Committee for German Social Democratic Refugees, which was led by parliament members, Wenzel Jaksch and Siegfried Taub.⁶ In order to illustrate the complexity of issues facing the Sudeten German refugees, we focus here on the emigration of a group of Sudeten German Social Democrats to Canada in the spring and summer months of 1939. This study is based on original documents from the British Public Record Office (London), the National Archives of Canada (Ottawa), the Central State Archive (Státní ústřední archiv, Prague), and the Imperial War Museum (London).

Jaksch correctly evaluated that possibilities for members of his Party in what remained of Czecho-Slovakia were bleak. He utilized his connections with the British Labour Party to organize help in Britain. He met with the various representatives of the British Government already in October 1938 and inquired about possibilities for Sudeten Germans to emigrate to the British Dominions.⁷ Jaksch visited Malcolm Macdonald, a high official of the Dominions Office, and described the sad plight of his fellow Sudeten German Social Democrats in Czecho-Slovakia. Jaksch's memorandum, "The Problem of the Non-Nazi Germans in Czecho-Slovakia", pointed out the dependence of the new Czecho-Slovak state on the future "good will" of Nazi Germany and also the strong anti-German sentiment among the Czech population. In Jaksch's eyes, there was no economic future for the Sudeten Germans in Czecho-Slovakia. The Dominions Office immediately requested assistance from the High Commissioner of the Dominions.⁸ The

⁴ Heumos, P., *Die Emigration aus der Tschechoslowakei nach Westeuropa und dem Nahen Osten*, Munich, 1989.

⁵ Velecká, H., *Britská pomoc uprchlíkům z Československa od okupace do vypuknutí války v roce 1939*, *Soudobé dějiny* 4/2001, issue 4, pp. 659–681.

⁶ Černý, B., *Německá sociálně demokratická dělnická strana v ČSR a emigrace 1938/39*, *Český časopis historický* 9/1997, issue 3–4, pp. 655–678.

⁷ PRO, D.O. 35/718M 582/3. *The Problem of the Non-Nazi Germans in Czechoslovakia* (Memorandum by Herr Jaksch), October 1938.

⁸ *Ibid.*, D.O. 35/718 M 582/3. Informal discussion at D.O. between MacDonald, Duke of Devonshire and the High Commissioners, 5 October 1938; *Ibid.*, DO. 718/6 M 582/5 Note of Herr Jaksch's interview with the Duke of Devonshire, 6 October 1938.

initial response was not encouraging because refugees, predominantly Jews, from Germany and Austria, had exhausted the immigration quotas. In order to assure the safety of those refugees in greatest danger, the British made 350 visas available to Jaksch and Taub.⁹ The visas were originally only for the political activists themselves, and not for their families. The French promised 700 visas, but authorizations were very slow in coming. Pressure had been building in Britain to help Sudeten German refugees by making Government funds available for their resettlement.¹⁰ In order to resolve the refugee problem, Treasury official and member of the Runciman mission, Robert J. Stopford, was appointed liaison to the British Legation in Prague.¹¹ Stopford played a key role in organizing the resettlement of Sudeten Germans.

In the meantime, the Dominions Office received notice of some interest from Canada, raising the possibility of settlement of some “agriculturists and glass workers.”¹²

The Canadian Government had empowered Canadian railroad companies to facilitate immigration to new settlement territories in the west of the country. The railroads sent representatives to Prague to explore the situation among Sudeten refugees.¹³ Their mission, however, proved unsuccessful.

The situation in the Czecho-Slovakia got a new sense of urgency when a new “*Option Agreement for Non-Jewish German Refugees*” was adopted in November 1938. This agreement prevented most of the Sudeten Germans from taking refuge in Czecho-Slovakia because it based the right to Czecho-Slovak citizenship on domicile prior to 1910.¹⁴ The Sudeten German Social Democrats opened the office of the London Representative of the Sudeten German Refugees led by Willi Wanka.¹⁵ Figure 1 is a photocopy of the original power of attorney document given to Wanka by parliamentary

⁹ Ibid., D.O. 718/6 M 582/5 Note of Herr Jaksch’s interview with the Duke of Devonshire, 6 October 1938.

¹⁰ Ibid., M582/24, F.O. C 13136/11896/12 Layton’s letter to Halifax, 28 October 1938.

¹¹ Ibid., M582/37, C 13088/2320/12 Treasury letter of offer to Stopford, 31 October 1938.

¹² Ibid., Price’s report on the possibility of settlement in the Dominions, 1 November 1938.

¹³ Ibid., M582/59, Stopford’s letter to Waley, 8 November 1938.

¹⁴ PRO, D.O. 35/719/2 Devonshire’s letter to High Commissioners, 30 November 1938; Cable No.1, 056 from Stopford to Waley.

¹⁵ National Archives of Canada, MG30, C232, File 26 (Papers of Willi Wanka), Power of Attorney for Willi Wanka, 27 November 1938; Certificate of the Ministry of Social Welfare, 23 November 1938.

deputies Jaksch and Taub. Figure 2 represents a photocopy of the original certificate from the Czecho-Slovak Ministry of Social Welfare in four languages confirming Wanka's legitimacy. Wanka was a functionary of the Sudeten German Social Democratic Party, initially at district offices in České Budějovice and Plzeň. Later, he worked at the Central Secretariat in Prague, where he closely collaborated with Jaksch. Wanka was fluent in English, worked extremely hard, and selflessly organized the emigration of his comrades to Canada. At the same time, another Party representative, Franz Rehwald, an economic expert and editor, was sent to Canada to negotiate Sudeten German emigration with Canadian officials. Jaksch and Wanka worked out the details of financial needs for resettlement to the British Dominions based on existing regulations.¹⁶ They visited the Dominions Office again in December 1938 and presented the High Commissioner of the Dominions with lists of potential settlers.¹⁷

In order to further his agenda in London, Jaksch exaggerated the conditions among Sudeten German refugees in Czecho-Slovakia. Articles started to appear in British newspapers, which described the situation in refugee camps as one of semi-starvation caused by neglect on the part of local authorities.¹⁸ The article also criticized the lack of heating facilities. A few days later, a similar article appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, which criticized conditions in two specific camps without directly identifying them.¹⁹ These reports provoked sharp discussions at the advisory committee of the Lord Mayor's Fund in Prague. The representatives of the Czechoslovak Red Cross inspected the main camp in question. The report submitted by the commander of the Czechoslovak Mobile Epidemic Unit, Captain Karel Raška, M.D., to the army command, dated 29 December 1938, indicates that Jaksch had somewhat exaggerated the problems in Světlá nad Sázavou and that those problems mentioned in the newspaper articles, including heat, had already been rectified.²⁰ Reports by Stopford to the British Home

¹⁶ Ibid., Wenzel Jaksch and Willi Wanka "Need for a Speedy Settlement of the Financial Problem of the Emigration of Sudeten Refugees".

¹⁷ PRO, D.O. 35/719/2, M582/74 Devonshire to Massey, 12 December 1938; FO C 15119/11896/12. Makins to Stopford, 8 December 1938; Stopford to Waley, 5 December 1938; Waley to Makins, 10 December 1938.

¹⁸ The Daily Telegraph and Morning Post, "Aiding Czechs to Emigrate", 14 December 1938.

¹⁹ Raška, F. D., *Uprchlícké tábory*, p. 741.

²⁰ Papers of Prof. MUDr. Karel Raška, DrSc. (1909–1987), File 158.201/zdrav. 1938, Report to army command, 29 December 1938.

Office stated that he had personally visited a number of camps where no complaints had been made regarding food and the former shortage of washing accommodations had either been made good or the necessary arrangements had been undertaken.²¹ Inspections of camps throughout Bohemia and Moravia by Dr. Raška and Mr. Sams of the Lord Mayor's Fund revealed that conditions in camps with German inhabitants were far better than in those containing Czechs.²²

In December, negotiations were initiated concerning a British loan to Czecho-Slovakia.²³ Four million pounds of the loan were to be made a free gift to be used directly for refugee resettlement. Dr. Pospíšil of the Ministry of Finance represented the Czecho-Slovak side at the negotiations. The British required guarantees regarding the German refugees, Dr. Pospíšil could not provide without consultations in Prague.²⁴ An agreement on the loan was finally reached and signed in January 1939 and the size of the loan was significantly increased. It was to be administered by the Anglo-Czech and Živnostenská Banks.²⁵

Rehwald's activities in Canada, supported by efforts of the Dominions Office in London, brought results. On 15 December 1938, Rehwald was in a position to cable the following to Wanka:²⁶

“LOOKS VERY ENCOURAGING HERE FOR SATISFACTORY SOLUTION FOR OUR GROUP PROVIDING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES CAN BE SOLVED. STOP. PLEASE URGE IN LONDON THAT FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE – REHWALD.”

A photocopy of the original cable received by Wanka at the Harewood Hotel in London is included in Figure 3. Wanka informed the relevant

²¹ PRO, D.O. 35/719/2, M582/79, “Refugee Situation in Czechoslovakia by R. J. Stopford, 7 December 1938.

²² Raška, F. D., p. 741; Papers of Prof. MUDr. Karel Raška, DrSc., Report of the Mobile Epidemic Unit of the Ministry of Public Health and Physical Education, Prague, 12 December 1938.

²³ PRO, D.O. 35/719/2, M582/79, Czecho-Slovakia – Financial Assistance.

²⁴ Ibid., M582/78 Draft of the letter to be written by Czecho-Slovakia (Dr. Pospíšil; Financial Assistance) Schedules CCCXC-B/(11.), 17 December 1938; Stopford's minute in meeting with Dr. Kalfus, 8 December 1938; *ibid.* M582/83, Leith-Ross's minute, 17 December 1938.

²⁵ PRO, D.O. 35/719/3 M582/107, Price's report on the meeting on Canada Scheme, 18 January 1939; *ibid.*, Price's report, 28 January 1939.

²⁶ National Archives of Canada, 7G30, C232, File 26 (Papers of Willi Wanka) Rehwald's cablegram, 15 December 1938; Wanka's letters to Gilles, Culpin, Stopford, Layton, Greenfell and Miss Layton, 15 December 1938; Stopford to Wanka, 16 December 1938.

parties in London and the Duke of Devonshire convened a meeting including both representatives of Canada and Stopford, where it was established that Canada might consider the Sudeten German refugees as a group and admit them collectively.²⁷ The amount needed per family was set at £ 200 pounds. Just before Christmas, a new telegram came from Rehwald:²⁸

YOUR CABLE TWENTY THIRD INSTANT RECEIVED STOP FROM ALL I CAN LEARN AM CONVINCED TWO HUNDRED POUND PER FAMILY IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH GROUP HERE WITH REASONABLE CHANCE SUCCESS AND STRONGLY URGE YOU INSIST AMOUNT INCREASED TO THREE HUNDRED POUNDS PER FAMILY PLUS STEAMSHIP AND RAIL FARES STOP THE FACT OUR FAMILIES ARE MOSTLY INEXPERIENCED MAKES IT MORE EXPENSIVE TO ESTABLISH THEM ON FARMS THAN FULLY EXPERIENCED FARM FAMILIES AND THE LENGTH OF TIME DURING WHICH THEY WILL REQUIRE HELP BEFORE THEY BECOME SELF SUSTAINING WILL BE LONGER STOP DURING THE DISCUSSIONS AT OTTAWA GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THREE HUNDRED POUNDS PER FAMILY PLUS FARES WAS THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM WITH WHICH OUR FAMILIES COULD BE ESTABLISHED – REHWALD

A photocopy of this cable is shown in Figure 4.

The British officials felt that it might be too late to demand an increase in support from the Czecho-Slovak Government.

In January 1939, the last cable came from Rehwald:²⁹

IMMIGRATION MINISTER HAS TODAY APPROVED ACCEPTANCE OUR PHYSICALLY FIT FAMILIES WHO ARE SUITABLE FOR LAND SETTLEMENT WHETHER THEY ARE EXPERIENCED OR NOT BUT THIS CONDITIONAL ON HAVING CAPITAL AVERAGING FIFTEEN HUNDRED DOLLARS PER FAMILY IN ADDITION TO TRANSPORTATION STOP ALL CANADIAN AUTHORITIES EXPERIENCED IN LAND SETTLEMENT ARE AGREED THAT CAPITAL STATED IS ESSENTIAL BECAUSE THOSE INEXPERIENCED WILL HAVE TO BE SETTLED

²⁷ PRO, D.O. 35/719/2 M582/85, Minutes of the meeting with the High Commissioners, 19 December 1938.

²⁸ National Archives of Canada, MG30, C232, File 26 (Papers of Willi Wanka) Rehwald's cablegrams to Wanka, 22 and 24 December 1938.

²⁹ Ibid., Rehwald's cablegram, 16 January 1939.

UNDER SPECIAL CONDITIONS INVOLVING TRAINING SUPERVISION
ERECTION OF FARM BUILDINGS AND INITIAL LAND CLEARING
A PROGRAMME THAT WILL CALL FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS OR
MORE CAREFUL OVERSIGHT STOP SINGLE MEN AND WOMEN MAY
BE ATTACHED TO AND INCLUDED WITH FAMILY UNITS STOP HAVE
ALSO COMPLETED UNDERSTANDING ABOUT TRANSFER SPECIAL
INDUSTRIES ON WHICH I WILL REPORT TO YOU ON ARRIVAL
LONDON STOP ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT ALL PUBLICITY BE
AVOIDED STOP CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ADVISING MISTER
MASSEY STOP SUGGEST YOU GIVE MESSRS MASSEY AND LITTLE
COPIES THIS CABLE STOP EXPECT SAIL TWENTY FIRST – REHWALD.

Figure 5 represents a copy of this cable.

The request regarding publicity reflected some inquiries about German settlement in Canada by the opposition in the Canadian House of Commons. Meetings with the representative of the Czecho-Slovak Institute for Refugee Welfare, Dr. Lev Zavřel, were organized at the Treasury with the Canadian High Commissioner's Deputy, Pearson, and Canadian Immigration Commissioner, W. Little. Zavřel reported that £ 250 pounds were available per family when 2,000 families were expected to emigrate to Canada. Raising the landing fees to £ 300 pounds per family would exceed the dedicated sum of a half million pounds. The only option left was to increase the size of the families by "attaching single persons" to them.³⁰

In the negotiations that ensued, new problems arose. It was revealed that the Sudeten German immigrants were to be settled in the Peace River district of British Columbia. Mr. Greenfell, M.P. of the British Committee for Refugees from Czecho-Slovakia, who knew Canada well, doubted the suitability of the region. Mr. Franz Rehwald was also lukewarm, and pointed out that, under these conditions, the number of settler families would likely be lower, perhaps 100 in Britain and 700 in Czecho-Slovakia.³¹

A handwritten note by C.R. Price of the Dominions Office, which accompanied the official report was also doubtful as to the location of the settlement, but he concluded that "... beggars can't be choosers..."

The Canadians continued to increase their demands. The funds available were to be withdrawn from the individual settlers and deposited to a central

³⁰ PRO, D.O. 55/719/3 M582/107 Price's report, 28 January 1939.

³¹ Ibid., Price's minute, 10 February 1939.

fund. An immediate advance of funds was needed or a complete breakdown of the planned action was probable...³²

The final plans called for starting the resettlement in Canada on 15 April 1939 and 1 May 1939, respectively, by bringing 50 families to Canada. Half of them were to settle in the Peace River district of British Columbia under the auspices of the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company. The other half was headed to St. Walburg in Saskatchewan under the direction of the Canadian National Railroad.³³ The details of the planned settlement are described in the document "German Czech Group."³⁴ The sum needed for initial arrangements was \$ 150,000, the transfer of which was ordered on 2 March 1939.³⁵

In collaboration with the Prague office led by Rehwald, Wanka frantically worked on the administrative prerequisites required by the Canadian authorities, including validation of travel documents.³⁶

Their plans were interrupted by Hitler's march into Prague on 15 March 1939. The British, however, remained optimistic³⁷ and assured the Canadians that the planned funds would be forthcoming, so that the "Canadian scheme" could proceed.³⁸ Wanka then had to organize the transfer of refugees' personal funds to the British Committee for Refugees.³⁹

The first transport of Sudeten German settlers left Southampton aboard the S.S. Montcalm on 8 April 1939. Eighty-seven people were headed to Peace River, and eighty-four for St. Walburg, Saskatchewan. The

³² Ibid., Price's minute, 13 February 1939; telegram No. 54 from External Ottawa to Dominion Canada, 10 February 1939.

³³ Ibid., cable to Immigration branch, 13 February 1939; copy (undated) of cable from Trend (Treasury) to Stopford (Prague); Imperial War Museum (London), Stopford collection 3/9 telegrams at Prague legation (38-39). Log of the telegrams received by Stopford dates this cable to 16 February 1939.

³⁴ National Archives of Canada, MG30, C232, File 27 (Papers of Willi Wanka) M582/107 German Czech Group, 17 February 1939.

³⁵ PRO, D.O. 35/720/1 M582/129 Emigration Finance, 6 March 1939; Státní ústřední archiv (Prague) Fond MPSP-R (repatriace), Box 158 #347, K. Šlapák – report on the activities of the so called Stopford Action, 21. 3. 1944.

PRO, T 160/1324/F135 77/05/6 Treasury to Stopford, 16 March 1939.

³⁶ National Archives of Canada, MG30, C232, File 27 (Papers of Willi Wanka) Little to Wanka, 3 March 1939.

³⁷ PRO, D.O. 35/720/11 M582/139 Price to Trend, 30 March 1939.

³⁸ Ibid., M582/157 Pearson to Home Office, 17 April 1939; Maxwell (HO) to Canada House, 20 April 1939.

³⁹ National Archives of Canada MG30, C232, File 27 (Papers of Willi Wanka); *ibid.*, Playfair (Treasury), 30 March 1939, to Wanka, 31 March 1939.

transports, which followed were leaving at approximately biweekly intervals. Willi Wanka informed the Sudeten Germans about the progress of the Canadian emigration in his circular.⁴⁰ The last sailing took place on 28 July 1939 on the Duchess of York. Wanka was on board along with his family destined for Tupper Creek in the Peace River district.

At this time, support for refugees from Czechoslovakia received new sponsorship: The Czech Refugee Trust Fund was created,⁴¹ which played an important role in maintaining Czechoslovak refugees in Great Britain.

The first phase of the settlement of the Sudeten Germans in Canada was complete. Three hundred and two families and seventy-two single persons were brought to Canada. Although the size of the group of settlers was much smaller than originally anticipated, it represents an important milestone in the history of Czechoslovak emigration. The resettlement to Canada was made possible by the tireless and dedicated efforts of the Sudeten German Social Democratic leader, Wenzel Jaksch, who used all his strengths and connections to assure safe conduct for his followers. His very diligent associates, Willi Wanka and Franz Rehwald, assisted him. Wanka's selfless work on behalf of the Sudeten German refugees won not only appreciation and thanks from the émigrés, but also the admiration and respect of many British politicians, officials, and philanthropists. Figure 6 shows the letter of appreciation written by those included in the first transport to Canada. Lastly, the activities of various British Government officials, specifically at the Foreign Office, the Dominions Office, and the Treasury have to be acknowledged. Whether they acted due to their feeling of British responsibility for Munich, or due to the pressure of public sympathies for Czechoslovak refugees, these officials did all they could to facilitate this process.

Moving people from one of the most developed parts of Central Europe to the Canadian wilderness requires no comment. What the settlers found upon their arrival must have shocked them. At Tupper Creek, there was a shack of a "railroad station" and eight unfurnished log cabins lacking floors and roofs... At St. Walburg, there were some abandoned, decrepit farms... The settlers were not treated by the Canadian railroads with kid gloves. It is a testament to the industry and will of these people that they

⁴⁰ Ibid., Vorläufiger Bericht über die Durchführung der Kanada-Aktion, 17 June 1939.

⁴¹ PRO, D.O., 35/720/1 M582/164 Czech Refugee Trust Fund and Directions to the Trustees, July 1939.

overcame the initial difficulties and ultimately prospered. Wartime life in the settlements was very austere. The details are described vividly in *Tomslake*, a memoir by settler, Andrew Amstätter.⁴² Forty-six of the men enlisted in the Canadian armed forces and fought in the war. After the war, the settlers became the nucleus of Sudeten ethnic activities in Canada. Although the Canadian group formed the largest of the Sudeten German Social Democratic exile groups (after Britain), it never played a major role in West German politics after the war and its influence in Sudeten German expellee organizations was marginal. A memorial plaque at the Tupper Creek settlement, unveiled during celebrations marking the Canadian centennial in 1967, reads:

...And while the world was bent upon wholesale destruction in the years following the Munich Agreement, the people from the Sudetenland, with steadfast determination and hard work, built farmsteads here where they could rear their children as free people in a free country...

⁴² Amstätter, A., *Tomslake: History of the Sudeten Germans in Canada*, Seattle, 1978.

SEKRETARIAT
der Deutschen sozialdemokratischen
Arbeiterpartei
in der Tschechoslowakischen Republik
Prag XII, Hlávčáková 23
Telefon Nr. 2000

Prag, den 22. November 1938.

Vollmacht

mit welcher Willi W a n k a mit der Gesamtleitung der Flüchtlingsgelder
betraut wird. Willi W a n k a kann die Aufgabe zu, alle im Auslande
befindlichen Emigranten in Evidenz zu halten und alle sie betreffenden
Angelegenheiten zu betreiben.

Sekretariat
der Deutschen sozialdemokratischen
Arbeiterpartei
in der Tschechoslowakischen Republik



Figure 1: Photocopy of W. Wanka's original "Power of Attorney" letter by W. Jaksch and S. Taub (National Archives of Canada).

P o t v r z e n í .

Ministerstvo sociální péče republiky Československé potvrzuje, že Vilém W a n k a, narozený dne 28. června 1910 ve Stodě jedná se souhlasem československé vlády jmenem komitátu československých uprchlíků německé národnosti o jejich umístění v cizině.

V Praze dne 28. listopadu 1938.

Le Ministère de la Prévoyance sociale de la République tchécoslovaque certifie que M. Guillaume W a n k a, né le 28 juin 1910 à Stod, agit au nom du Comité des réfugiés tchécoslovaques d'origine allemande et avec le consentement du Gouvernement tchécoslovaque au sujet de l'émigration d'édits réfugiés.

Praque le 28 novembre 1938.

The Ministry of Social Welfare certifies that Mr. Wilhelm W a n k a, born on June 28, 1910 in Stod, is acting in accordance with the Czechoslovak Government in the name of the Committee for Czechoslovak refugees of german origin as regards to their emigration.

Praque, novembre 28, 1938.

B e s t ä t i g u n g .

Das Ministerium für soziale Fürsorge der Tschechoslovakischen Republik bestätigt, dass Herr Wilhelm W a n k a, geboren am 28. Juni 1910 in Stod, als Bevollmächtigter der tschechoslovakischen Regierung im Namen des Komitees der tschechoslovakischen Flüchtlinge deutscher Nationalität bezüglich deren Auswanderung handelt.

Prag am 28. November 1938.

Se ministra :



Hájek

Figure 2: Photocopy of original certificate issued by the Ministry of Social Welfare (National Archives of Canada).

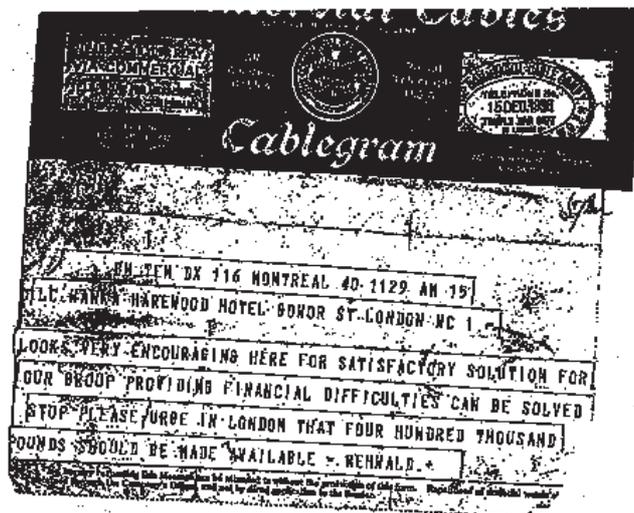


Figure 3: Photocopy of original telegram of F. Rehwald to W. Wanka dated 15 December 1938 (National Archives of Canada).

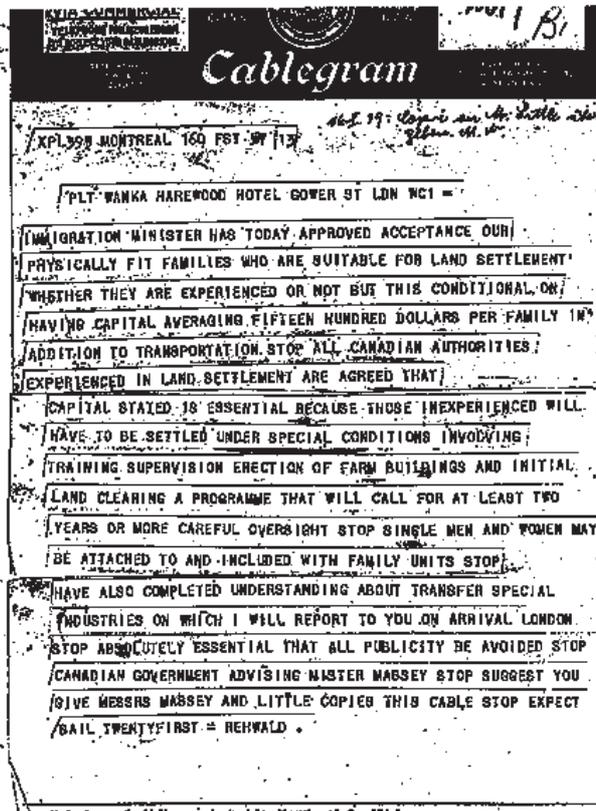


Figure 4: Photocopy of original telegram of 24 December 1938 (National Archives of Canada).



JENL LX376 MONTREALQUE 127 1/50 25
 NLT WANKA BAREWOOD HOTEL CORNER ST
 LONDON WCI

YOUR CABLE TWENTYTHIRD INSTANT RECEIVED STOP FROM ALL I
 CAN LEARN AM CONVINCED TWO HUNDRED POUNDS PER FAMILY IS
 NOT SUFFICIENT TO ESTABLISH GROUP HERE WITH REASONABLE
 CHANCE SUCCESS AND STRONGLY URGE YOU INSIST AMOUNT INCREASED
 TO THREE HUNDRED POUNDS PER FAMILY

CONTINUED



JENL LX376 BNDGHEET WANKA 77

PLDS STEAMSHIP AND RAIL FARES STOP THE FACT OUR FAMILIES
 ARE MOSTLY INEXPERIENCED MAKES IT MORE EXPENSIVE TO
 ESTABLISH THEM ON FARMS THAN FULLY EXPERIENCED FARM
 FAMILIES AND THE LENGTH OF TIME DURING WHICH THEY WILL
 REQUIRE HELP BEFORE THEY BECOME SELFMAINTAINING WILL BE
 LONGER STOP DURING THE DISCUSSIONS AT OTTAWA GOVERNMENT
 OFFICIALS MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT THREE HUNDRED POUNDS
 PER FAMILY PLUS FARES WAS THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM WITH WHICH
 OUR FAMILIES COULD BE ESTABLISHED

REHWALD

No liability accepted. This message can be attended to without the purchase of this form. Reproduction of material herein should be obtained through the Company, Ottawa, and not by direct application to the sender.

Figure 5: Photocopy of original telegram of 16 January 1939.

Barry, am 6. April 1939.

Herrn

Willi WANKEL,

London

Lieber Freund WANKEL!

Uns Genossinnen und Genossen aus dem Lager in Barry, die wir mit dem ersten Transport nach Kanada abgehen, ist es vor der Abreise aus Europa ein aufrichtig gefühltes Bedürfnis, Dir und den anderen Mitgliedern des Londoner Komitees für die bisherige unentgeltliche Arbeit in Dienste unserer Bewegung den innigsten Dank auszusprechen. Wir können mit ~~seiner~~ Genugtuung feststellen, dass sich wohl noch niemals Freiwilligen einer so umfassenden Fürsorge erfreuten, wie sie uns infolge Eurer Bemühungen zum Teil geworden ist. Es gibt noch keinen Zweifel darüber, dass Ihr uns auch in Kanada jegliche Hilfe und Unterstützung ungedeiht lassen werdet, soweit dies in Eurer Macht gelegen ist. Momentan hiebt sich uns keine andere Gelegenheit, unseren Dank anders als in Worten zum Ausdruck bringen zu können. Ihr könnt aber die Versicherung entgegennehmen, dass wir bei passender Gelegenheit Trans ~~mit~~ Freue vergelten werden.

Dieses Versprechen gilt vor allem auch unseren beiden Genossen Jakob und Teub, die in schwerster Zeit ihre Pflicht restlos bis zur Selbstaufopferung erfüllt haben, und, soweit uns bekannt ist, noch immer nicht in der glücklichen Lage wie wir uns aus, sich in Freiheit und Sicherheit zu wissen. Wir wünschen nur, dass es recht bald gelingen, sie mit all den anderen Schicksalsgefährten retten zu können, und dass es uns ~~seiner~~ gegönnt sein möge, sie wiederum in unserer Mitte als die Hüter des herrlichen Gedankengutes unserer Bewegung begrüssen zu können.

F r a u n d s c h a f t

Handwritten signatures:
 Wilhelm Hinkel
 Josef Wagner
 Hans Peter Wagner
 Hans Hinkel

Handwritten signatures:
 Hans Hinkel
 Hans Hinkel
 Hans Hinkel
 Hans Hinkel
 Hans Hinkel
 Hans Hinkel
 Hans Hinkel

Figure 6: Photocopy of appreciation letter by the members of the first transport sailing to Canada on the SS. Montcalm dated 6 April 1939 (National Archives of Canada).