

THE FEDERAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATOR

WASHINGTON

June 23, 1952

MEMORANDUM TO: The President

FROM: Oscar R. Ewing *OPE*
Federal Security Administrator

I want to urge you to veto H.R. 5678, which is the McCarran-Walter Immigration Bill. Politically, I see little to be lost and much to be gained by a veto.

Few legislative matters affect as many people or groups in the United States as immigration. Religious, nationality and civic groups feel very strongly about immigration, and organize politically to achieve their aims.

1. The major religious agencies in the United States are opposed to the bill. This includes:

National Council of Churches of Christ
American Friends Service Committee
National Lutheran Council
National Catholic Charities
American Jewish Congress
American Jewish Committee

Among the Catholic organizations, the bill has been opposed by such publications as the Catholic Interracialist and the national Catholic weekly America.

Jewish organizations, including the Jewish War Veterans, have been unanimous in their opposition to the bill. Although large-scale Jewish immigration to the United States is a thing of the past they are greatly concerned with what the provisions of this bill would do to persons already in this country.

Protestant organizations, led by the National Council of Churches of Christ and the American Friends Service Committee, have been vocal in their opposition to the bill. Many religious groups, especially those involved in the displaced persons program, are worried about the large increase in hardship cases with which they may have to deal as a result of the enactment of this bill.



2. The major nationality groups, except for the Japanese-American, have opposed the bill. Americans who traced their origin and parentage to the European countries with over-subscribed quotas, especially Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Rumania, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia -- are upset by this bill, for two main reasons: (1) it would absolutely ban immigration from these countries for an indefinite future, except for "experts" and close relatives of Americans, whose "preferences" under the new bill run to 100 percent of existing quotas and (2) it would threaten naturalized citizens with ex post facto denaturalization, and would threaten unnaturalized or denaturalized aliens with ex post facto deportation, for a variety of new and trivial reasons.

The larger organizations most directly concerned with the problem are those of American-Italian or Polish descent. The Sons of Italy with a following in New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Connecticut, Massachusetts and California have been particularly active in the fight against the McCarran-Walter Immigration Bill. Polish organizations with a substantial following in New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and other states have been similarly active.

3. Negroes throughout the country are upset by the new bars against the colonial immigration which are obviously directed against colored immigrants but would still be objectionable if they were equally directed against white persons of colonial status. The NAACP has vigorously opposed the bill.

4. The concern of first generation of Americans and naturalized citizens over this bill is steadily growing as more and more of them penetrate beneath the superficial news reports. Until very recently the newspapers have tried to portray this bill essentially as a codification, or perhaps a liberalization, of existing law, which is certainly very far from the truth.

These Americans of recent immigrant stock are aware that this bill is a product of the Republican-Democratic coalition. They know that restriction immigration laws were vetoed by President Wilson and passed by the Harding and Coolidge administrations. They feel that the Democratic party is their friend. They are, therefore, confident that no Democratic President will permit the McCarran-Walter Bill to become law.

5. On the basis of the legitimate interests of persons and groups who have always supported the Democratic party, I urge you to veto H.R. 5678.

