

"Dear Mr. President", New York, New York, January or February 1942

AFS 6409B

Cut B1

Austrian Refugee: Mr. President, at the present time I'm a hatcheck girl in a Spanish nightclub in the village. But I'm a refugee from Austria and make my doctor of law from University of Vienna. For the time being we Austrians are regarded enemy aliens. We cannot help it, it doesn't depend upon our having our citizen papers or not. Let's stop it. Let's stop it, it's all wrong.

Interviewer: OK.

Cut B2

Austrian Refugee: Mr. President, I am a refugee from Austria, where I make my law degree at University of Vienna. For the time being, I'm checking hats in a Spanish nightclub. Right now, we Austrian refugees are regarded enemy aliens. I would love to tell you my name here and my address, but I do not dare to as my people are still on the other side and I don't want to endanger them.

Whether we are called enemy aliens or not doesn't make the faintest difference to our feelings and to our wishes. I think that no American citizen can deeper appreciate what it means to fight for democracy than somebody who has never lived in a democracy, but who is a refugee from a dictatorship and to found refuge in a demo- . . .

Cut B3

Austrian Refugee: Mr. President, I am a refugee from Austria and therefore I would much prefer not to tell you my name or my address as all my people are still on the other side and I do not dare to endanger them. I make my law degrees from University of Vienna, but right now I'm checking hats in a Spanish nightclub.

We Austrians and Germans are regarded enemy aliens, but that doesn't change our wishes or our feelings. I think that no American can deeper appreciate what it means to fight for a democracy than somebody who has never lived in a democracy, but who has barely escaped the dictatorship to find refuge in a democratic paradise.

I do not think that any American can better understand what those freedoms mean for which we are fighting right now. We have never known what freedom of speech or freedom of press means. But



we have always guessed that it must be something wonderful to have them. Now when we first got a taste of them we know that it is worth everything to retain them. We are not allowed to do our share at the present time. Only very few of us — the boys in the army - can do what we all would like to do. But I can assure you that every single one of us will do everything within his power when his time comes. We all will be there to our last breath and to our last drop of blood. The title, enemy alien, is a handicap to express sincere feelings, but I think that we can disregard the word enemy and just let the word aliens.

Your fight is our fight much more than an American citizen can understand because we have lost everything and we have left everybody behind who was dear to us. We only have the future, we have no past. And we have to fight for this future to make it possible to live in it. Will you please allow me, although I am an enemy alien, to say with American people and with you, God Bless America. Thank you.