

YIVO Press Conference 14.2.07

New documents confirm Otto H.Frank's efforts to obtain a USA entry visa for his family and himself.

The Anne Frank House (AFS) was founded in 1957 to give the public access to the place where Anne Frank was in hiding from Nazi persecution during WW II and where she wrote the diary that made her posthumously famous following her death in the Bergen Belsen concentration camp. The Anne Frank house is now a museum with close to 1 million visitors a year. The House is actively engaged on work involving an international traveling exhibition as well many research and educational projects.

The ANNE FRANK-Fonds (AFF) was established in Basel in 1963 by Otto H.Frank and appointed as his universal legatee. The AFF is the legal owner of all copyrights relating to his written works and those of his daughter Annelies Marie Frank (ANNE FRANK).

AFF and AFS have a very close working relationship and jointly administer the copyright to all photographs relating to the Frank family.

For a number of years intensive efforts have been made by both organizations to collect and secure all documents relating to the history of the Frank family thus making them available for research purposes. Both organizations are proud of the fact that many years of intensive work have resulted in establishing a most comprehensive and wide ranging collection of documents and artifacts at the House in Amsterdam. They relate not only to the life and works of Otto H. Frank and his family but all those who were hidden in the "Secret Annex".

Every single new document in the aforementioned context is very important in building up as complete an historical picture as possible.

Unfortunately neither the AFS nor the AFF were able to view the newly discovered documents. A thorough examination will be necessary in order to establish their possible importance and relevance for the existing archives in Amsterdam.

For some considerable time it has been clear from documents already in the possession of the AFS and AFF, that Otto H. Frank had tried in vain to obtain USA and Cuban entry visas for himself and his family. It is also well known, that Otto H. Frank corresponded intensively with his friend Nathan Strauss and his brother's in law, Julius and Walter Hollaender, who all made efforts to try and obtain the necessary USA visas. Also known is the fact that Otto H. Frank tried to obtain the necessary emigration documents from the "Jewish Council" in Amsterdam. Very few cases are known of people who were able to reach safety by this route.

It is to be hoped that in the near future, YIVO will be prepared to put the newly found documents at the disposal of the ANNE FRANK-archive in Amsterdam and so add to the wealth of knowledge already available to researchers and historians.