

# American Friends Service Committee

20 South Twelfth Street



Philadelphia, Penna.

## BULLETIN ON RELIEF IN FRANCE

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Bulletin #21

For the Use of Editorial Comment and Re-publication

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".... More precious than jewels"

"Imagine how you would feel if you were in the position of the young French mother who told me she couldn't bear to look at her children any more, they were growing so thin and pale. She has not heard from her husband, who was, of course, in the army, since May, and has no idea whether he is alive or dead or a prisoner. She works from nine to six every day in order to get almost, but not quite, enough money to live on; at that she is more fortunate than many others who do not even have a job. At night she struggles at home trying to keep her children clean with the ration of half a cake of soap per month for each member of her family. With that amount she must manage somehow to do the dishes, and the laundry as well as bathe the children and herself.

"She receives a quarter of a liter of milk each day for each child, some of which she saves in order to try to make a little butter. Yesterday we were able to give her two small packets of vitamins, about 24 doses, for her children. She was so delighted that she put the packets, made of cellophane and studded with the glistening amber pills, on a table in front of her, where she fondled them, and gloated over them for nearly an hour; they were truly beautiful in their transparent wrapper. She said they were really too pretty and too precious to swallow - they were like jewels. Certainly diamonds and pearls are not valued so highly here now as these amber beads of vitamins."

Dorothy Bonnell