

# American Friends Service Committee

20 South Twelfth Street



Philadelphia, Penna.

## BULLETIN ON RELIEF IN FRANCE

Bulletin #34

For the Use of Editorial Comment and Re-publication

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Expectation that 80,000 school children in unoccupied France may benefit from the daily Quaker feeding in the schools, is expressed by Howard E. Kershner, director of Service Committee relief. He writes:

"There is no question about the need of enlarging our work. We ought to do at least twice as much during the coming winter as last year."

The chart of want is sharply etched. Further curtailment of fats, cheese and potatoes became effective October 1. Children are increasingly listless in the classroom, sit on benches in the play yard because they do not have physical energy for play. Physicians continue to report a rise in infant mortality, in the incidence of tuberculosis, predict a continuing upward sweep in mortality and morbidity charts.

It is for that reason that new surveys are being made by Quaker representatives in unoccupied France to determine the areas of greatest need. With widespread malnutrition, a private relief committee dependent on the supplies it can purchase abroad, can feed only the neediest. So widespread is the scarcity that in some of the schools where Quaker meals are being served it is necessary to rotate the children admitted, one group coming one week and another group taking their places the following week.

### Food Supplies Available

Howard Kershner continues to search for available European food supplies. His recent cables request permits from the United States Treasury Department to buy the following goods:

ITEM	QUANTITY	SOURCE	PRICE
Sardines	9,400 tins	Lisbon	34,420 escudos \$ 2,574.62
Salmon	1,296 tins		
Salmon	76,800 tins		11,200.00
Sugar	34 tons	Lisbon	110,500 escudos 8,265.40
Paper clothing	17 tons	Sweden	10,000 Swedish 2,390.00
Coats and pullovers for			kroner
men and women		Marseille	3,000.00
Milk (condensed & powdered)	650 tons	Switzerland	300,000.00
Dried Vegetables	650 tons	Marseille	5,000,000 francs 114,678.90
			\$442,108.92

The Service Committee hopes to have approximately \$300,000 available for these purchases. If all the commodities are purchased the Committee will need \$142,108.92 additional. Licenses for payment have been applied for at the United States Treasury.

If the Service Committee is able to purchase these goods, there is assurance that 80,000 children may be fed through the winter months, that 10,000 babies may receive the milk that may mean their survival, that a generation of young, born in war, may survive. Quaker distributions continue to be extra rations. The children receive the same scanty official rations as always, but rice, cocoa, chocolate, vegetables in a daily midday meal supplement an otherwise inadequate ration.

#### Nursing Mothers

Writing of the needs of pregnant women, one of the Quaker staff writes:

"Now that summer is over we are beginning to run up against familiar difficulties of undernourishment of pregnant women and nursing mothers. During the summer people have had fresh vegetables with some temporary interruptions, but they have been at all times expensive and difficult to get; and an exclusive diet of green vegetables is not much help to a nursing mother. The distribution of pates which we made with the recent milk deliveries was received with tremendous gratitude.

"There was a good deal of summer diarrhea and at present a fairly serious epidemic of typhoid. However, the young children up to three years, are, due to the milk distributions and school canteen programs, showing the beneficial effects. May we be able to get food to maintain this service."

#### The Story of a Few Tins of Milk

Typical of thousands of letters which come to the Marseille office is this one from a physician in St. Remy de Provence. Reporting on the distribution of milk sent to him for some of his most urgent patients, he writes:

"The first case I will report to you about is a little girl, three months old. Monique is the sixth child of a couple who are refugees from Paris and who work in the city to support their children. Monique and the younger children live in the country with a good grandmother. Toward the third month of her existence, little Monique could no longer digest fresh milk. The local supply of condensed milk being exhausted, she began to decline. Then your milk arrived in response to my appeal. It is thanks to that milk that she is alive today."

"May I tell you of another family. The father, a non-commissioned officer of the Army, is a prisoner. The mother with the three children was expelled from an Eastern Department on two hours notice. When I first met this mother and her children, their condition was pitiful. One child had contracted scarlet fever on the way down to unoccupied France and the two others caught it from her. Here again, it was precious tins of milk which helped these young lives through convalescence to health."

"Let me tell you also of the disposition of three remaining tins of milk to the family of a farm worker. His wages were insufficient and work irregular. The young mother, thin as a thread, was starving because she had refused to eat, leaving her small ration to two pale, rickety children of 4 and 2. This family, too, was saved from disaster."

When we speak of malnutrition and of starvation, it is so much easier to think of the problem in general terms, to forget the faces of the young, vanquished in their fight for life. Expressing this point of view, one of the Quaker representatives writes:

"Don't forget us over here - and don't let the people that can help us think we don't need help, or think for some reason or other that they must not give us the help we need. The coming winter is going to be terribly hard, and what will become of the children if they are not properly fed?"