



**AMERICA  
WE THANK YOU**  
An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

**HAWAII  
FACT  
SHEET**

Hawaii was an integral supporter of Near East Relief (NER), the American-led campaign that quickly sparked an international response with its unprecedented humanitarian endeavor, mobilizing all segments of American citizenry including elected officials, celebrities and laypersons alike, to help rescue victims of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey from 1915-1930.



- Hawaii established an NER office to facilitate all relief efforts throughout the region, which was located at the Hawaiian Trust Co. in Honolulu.

- Hawaii's NER committee was established in large part due to the work of the Rev. Dr Lincoln L. Wirt, an American Congregational minister and the international commissioner of the NER.

- After embarking from San Francisco aboard the *Golden Gate* in January 1922, Lincoln Wirt's first port of call was Waikiki, Hawaii, where he was warmly received at a reception held in his honor at the royal palace.

- At the event, an Armenian relief committee was formed with the American

governor, Sanford B. Dole, as its chairman and the wife of the well-known missionary Dr. William D. Westervelt as its secretary. Under their guidance, Wirt was sent to every town on each island appealing for aid on behalf of the suffering Armenians. Wirt noted that “in every community committees were set up and a thorough canvas for funds inaugurated.”

- As part of the intensive campaign in Hawaii, to which E. Guy Talbott of California, regional director for Near East Relief, was invited, Hawaii netted \$25,000 cash and several thousand dollars in pledges. At a Sunday morning service in the Central Union Church, Honolulu, \$10,800 was contributed, one check being for \$5,000.



An ANCA WR Initiative



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- On the day of Dr. Wirt's departure from Hawaii, he was handed a sum of \$50,000 from the committee, which was twice the expected quota from the island. Hawaii's Armenian relief committee continued to generously contribute funds and by the late 1920's had successfully collected over \$200,000 (about \$2.8 million dollars in today's terms) for the NER, which was regarded at the time as a remarkable achievement.

**Hawaii, We Thank You!**

Thanks to the generosity of Near East Relief, its participating organizations and entities, the U.S. Government and State Governments, and especially the American people at large, over 1,000,000 refugees and 132,000 orphans of the Armenian Nation and other Christian minorities were rescued, fed, clothed, and educated. We have survived, thrived, and prospered from the horrors of Genocide at the hands of Ottoman Turkey.

For your unwavering support and unprecedented generosity in donating to Near East Relief's humanitarian efforts, Hawaii, We Thank You!