



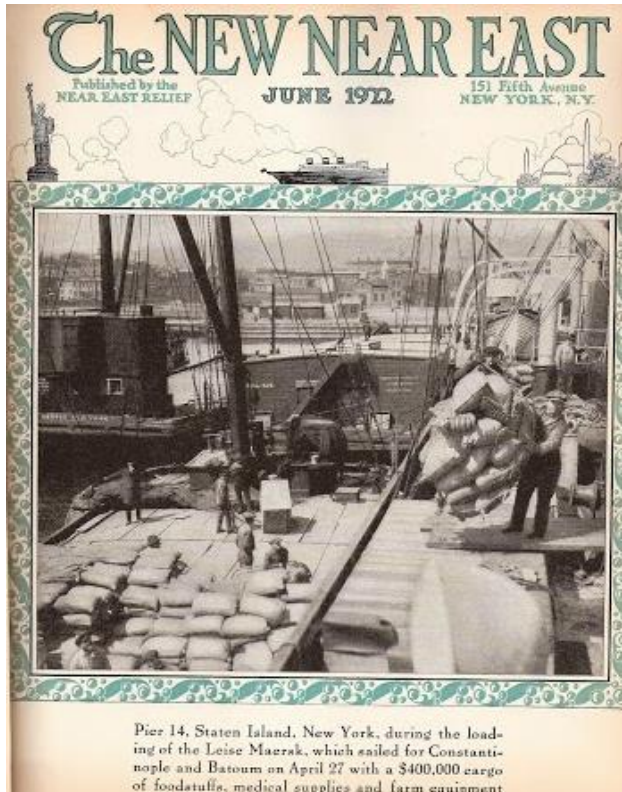
AMERICA WE THANK YOU

An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

NEW YORK

FACT SHEET

New York was a staunch 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.



- The story of Near East Relief began in the great state of New York.
- The majority of the original organizing committee were residents of New York, including the main financial supporter, Cleveland Dodge, who underwrote all administrative costs of the organization ensuring that every dollar raised, totaling \$117,000,000 from 1915-1930 went directly to the relief efforts.
- The very first meeting of the committee took place in New York City at the personal offices of Mr. Dodge, where \$60,000 was raised as a start up sum to deliver the urgent aid to the Armenians.
- Thereafter, the headquarters and national offices of the NER were established at 151 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York.

- On October 20, 1922, *The New York Times* published an article reporting on workers from four states that met and gifted \$10,000 to the Near East Relief. Workers of the NER from New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Connecticut met in the auditorium of the Missionary Education Movement on 25 Madison Avenue to complete plans for active campaign efforts in conjunction with the Near East Emergency Committee that had recently been appointed by President Harding, the article stated.

- “Archie Roosevelt, son of the ex-President and secretary of the President’s committee, outlined its purposes, which he said, are to effect close cooperation between the various organizations.” It continued, “R.J. Cuddihy, publisher of *The Literary Digest*, was present and gave a check of \$10,000 of the emergency fund to Charles V. Vickrey, General Secretary of the Near East Relief. Herbert Adams Gibbons, war correspondent, and Fred B. Smith of the Federal Council of Church, both of whom have just returned from a tour of the Near East” also spoke at the event.



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- On December 31, 1921, the “New York State Committee on Christmas Appeal” consisting of Theodore Roosevelt, John H. Finley, Cleveland Dodge, Brig. Gen. J. Leslie Kincaid, and Abrams L. Elkus, along with Captain Stephen N. Bobo, issued a letter to their personal friends stating “[H]unger knows no armistice – in the war against starvation, no ‘holiday’ can be declared.” The letter stated that “In the Near East, thousands of little children still wander, hungry and homeless and helpless, with no power to stay the hand of death except America – except YOU. In the Near East Relief orphanages, 60,700 more would perish if the heart of America grew cold. Political conditions are still chaotic. Warring forces still revenge these afflicted lands. The people, though they’re eager and able, have found it impossible to restore normal conditions of living. The Bread Lines creep as tragically as before – and more slowly, more sad.” The plea asks that the cry of the innocent children “must be heeded,” requesting that the public send their Christmas contributions to the headquarters of the NER in New York.
- In January 1921, *The New Near East* reported that the returns from the Christmas Appeal received by December 30th from New York totaled \$40,189.52.
- In the June 1923 publication of *The New Near East* magazine, it was noted that the school children of New York City, during the five months prior, contributed \$21,343.05 to NER in commodities, chiefly cans of condensed milk.
- The cover of *The New Near East* publication of June 1922 (as shown on the front page of this fact sheet) included a powerful image from Pier 14 at Staten Island, New York, which depicted the loading of the *Leise Maersk*, which sailed for Constantinople on April 27, 1922 with a \$400,000 cargo of food, medical supplies and farming equipment. About \$160,000 covered surplus army medical equipment from Camp Jackson, contributed by the US Government through the American Relief Administration, including an ambulance train, army cots, a field hospital and surgical and dental instruments. The vessel also carried 11 tractors and four trucks for use in the restoration farms. The remainder of the 4,000 tons of cargo was made up of corn grits, bean flour, dried fruits, canned goods, and fifty tons of old clothes. The Shipping Board steamship *Coeur d’Alene*, which sailed from Brooklyn the same day, carried an additional \$100,000 in supplies.
- In October 1916, the Committee of Mercy, comprised of Elihu Root (Honorary President), Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University (Vice President) John Purroy Mitchel Vice President and Mayor of New York), Katherine B. Davis (Vice President and Chairman Parole Commission of New York) J. Borden Harriman (Vice President), and remaining New State City officials, issued an appeal to help “in a most desperate emergency.” The letter stated, “More than a million Armenians are facing starvation and only by quick and generous action can their lives be saved. Here are a million innocent unoffending people isolated from the outer world, at the mercy of those from whom thousands have suffered persecution and death, appealing for the



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barest necessities of life. Many of them are little children, all of them are children in their helplessness....they are dying from day to day and only a few of them can be saved. Only to America can they look at this time for aid.” The letter included a circular, which described in detail the advices of the NER and a request for a generous contribution. The Committee of Mercy was supported by President Woodrow Wilson and endorsed by the Mayor of New York at the time, John Purroy Mitchel.

- In *The New Near East* publication of October 1920, a headline read “An Achievement and An Appeal: 3,400,000 pennies, or \$34,000, for Near East Relief.” The article stated that the public schools of Greater New York have contributed 2,400,000 pennies in cash (\$24,000) to the Near East Relief. Additionally, the public schools of Westchester County (then under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education of New York City) and private institutions contributed 1,000,000 pennies – the sum of \$10,000. The article noted that the enrollment of the public schools in N.Y. was 825,545 children in 525 school buildings. Six hundred and fifty educational institutions of Greater New York responded to the orphan appeal of the Near East Relief. Clearly, the schools of Greater New York did not fail to do their part in the war program and could be depended upon not to fail in sharing in the relief responsibilities.
- On August 30, 1921, a cablegram from Albert A. Johnson, Director of the New York State Institute of Applied Agriculture published the following statement in the *Boston Transcript*: “Near East Relief orphanages taxed to capacity while thousands of destitute orphans clamor for admittance. Disease, including cholera, spreading through reduced vitality of population owing to insufficient food. Now it is summer with chance for securing food. At best children dying daily for lack of sufficient nourishment. Winter will inevitably mean certain death to thousands unless outside aid is extended.”
- On September 26, 1921, Charles V. Vickrey was quoted in *The New York Times* with the following statement, “In Russian Armenia, I found the dead lying about the streets. The dead wagon had begun its daily rounds in Alexandropol in August instead of January, February or March as in previous years. In Erivan, the capital of Armenia, I found only hopeless women and children wandering about trying to exchange a second-hand garment or other personal property for food. This was in August. One’s imagination recoils before the picture of what conditions will be in February and March. It continued, “the total number of orphans in the Near East Relief territory exceeds 100,000.”
- *The New York Times* was so intently following the developments of the Armenian Genocide and the American relief response of the Near East Relief, that in 1915 alone, it published 145 articles alone about the Genocide, and thereafter, more than a dozen more regarding the American led relief efforts of the NER.



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- On October 1, 1921, Florence Spencer Duryea stated the following in the *Christian Science Monitor*: “Never was I so proud of being an American as when I saw those huge orphanages with the American flag flying over them. Thousands of Armenian children are getting care and food and clothing, having their lives saved by America. There were 12,000 children in our orphanages at Alexandropol and 2,000 girls are being trained in our industrious plant, half of them in the morning, the other half in the afternoon. At Erivan, where we have 11 orphanages, accommodating about 5,000 children, we have better equipment and teach them in addition rug making, knitting and weaving. We are training all of these boys and girls to be self-supporting. In Tiflis, Georgia, we saw thousands of children dressed from head to foot in clothing sent by Americans and very well dressed they were. And many of them were being care for by Americans in homes back in the mountains.”
- On January 27, 1922, the Near East Relief headquarters on Fifth Avenue received a cablegram which included an extract from a message that was received from Dr. Elliott of the American Women’s Hospital in Erivan: “Impossible to tell of misery in spite of enormous work of the Near East Relief. We have 852 cases in the hospital and children dying in all corners of Erivan. All day long we can hear wails and groans of little children outside office buildings hoping we can and will pick them up. If sun shines a little while they quiet down; when it rains they begin again. One day rain turned to snow it was awful to listen to them....We are picking them up as fast as possible but fatal to crowd them to such point we would lose even those already in orphanage.”
- The Near East Relief Warehouse located at 549 West 39th Street in New York City issued a call for “Clothing for Armenia” and stated that “six months in the year the people shiver.” The appeal itemizing the much-needed clothes for the needy and stated, “for the sake of the color-starved little ones, tuck in something bright.”
- “Say It With Flour” was a unique campaign that was initiated in Syracuse, New York, which proved itself to be popular and magnetic beyond hope. Since money itself could not feed starving Armenian children, it was planned that Americans should buy flour for Armenia. This campaign consisted of the cooperation of businessmen, especially millers and grocers. At a meeting of the Retailer Grocers’ Association in Syracuse, grocery men agreed to put on sale any brand of flour supplied them, regardless of their regular stock. In addition to the natural sale centers - the groceries- banks, restaurants, hotels, moving pictures houses, cigar stores and other business places lent themselves to the flour sale, as had the churches. Flour in carload lots were contributed and bought, while its free transportation to the Near East was guaranteed. Eventually, this campaign not only swept the state of New York, but the entire country as well.



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- A vigorous summertime campaign was conducted in New York among the lake resorts of the Adirondacks, with a group of speakers including Dr. Paul S. Leinbach, Mrs. Lillian M. Ascough and Dr. A.C. McCrea. The returns from Lake Placid alone totaled \$3,380. The success of the events was greatly aided by showings of the motion picture, "Seeing is Believing," and the sale of industrial goods at hotels and clubs. During the campaign at Chautauqua, Field Secretary J.W. Mace was the principal speaker. An exhibition and sale of the handiwork of the orphanage girls and refugee women of the Near East netted \$700 in a single day. Cooperating in the campaign, the Oriental Store of S.M. Rashid contributed to the fun ten percent of the entire sales for a day. In September 1923, *The New Near East* reported that five little girls held a neighborhood entertainment consistent of an original play called "The Fairy Godmother", and an adaptation which they made themselves from the fairy story, "Toads and Diamonds." They assumed all the business of the production themselves, including the making of the costumes. Ten cents admission was charged and as a result \$5.10 was turned into the Near East Relief.
- Knights of Columbus of Rochester, N.Y., whose Council was the largest in the Order, collected a "mountain of clothes" for NER, seven carloads in all - under the leadership of Grand Knight J.J. McInerney, reported *The New Near East* in its September 1923 edition.
- The September, 1923 edition of *The New Near East* ran an article providing a close-up look at some of the overseas workers who traveled from New York to take part in the relief efforts in Armenia. The article stated that the reconditioned U.S. Liner *Leviathan*, on her first trip sailing from New York on July 4, 1923, carried eight NER overseas workers, including Mrs. Phyllis Henrietta Brown of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Miss Katherine B. Tucker of Albany, N.Y., Miss Belle Bass of Rome, Ga., Miss Inez Webster of Galesburg, Ill., Miss Majorie Jean Wilson of Watertown, N.Y., Miss Mary E. Sill of Pittsburgh, Pa., Mr. Clark D Martin of Pine Grove, Pa., and Mr. Milton D. Brown of Malden, Mass. Each of these individuals were either established residents of New York or professionals with close ties to New York. Miss Brown's destination was Alexandropol, Armenia, where she was in charge of agricultural training in the orphan city of 20,000 children. She was a graduate of Vassar and of the New York State School of Agriculture and had affiliations with the Red Cross, National Girl Scouts, among others. Miss Tucker had gone to Alexandropol to serve as a nurse and had graduated from St. Agnes' School and from Columbia University in Science. She had received her nurse's training at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York. Miss Bass was an experienced relief worker, having served with the Red Cross and the YMCA in Europe.
- The State of New York engaged school children to be a part of the relief campaign. The *New Near East* reported that the children of New York City had given \$32,000 to the relief campaign.

New York, We Thank You!



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Thanks to the generosity of the Near East Relief, its participating organizations and entities, 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, New York, We Thank You!



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