



AMERICA WE THANK YOU

An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

OREGON FACT SHEET

Oregon 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.



- Oregon facilitated its relief efforts from its headquarters at 613 Stock Exchange Building in Portland.

- In 1922 Portland's Community Chest allocated \$33,000 to NER. The majority of churches in Oregon welcomed NER speakers and while small churches gave few dollars to NER there were a number of big donations.

- Some of the donations by Oregon churches were: First Methodist Church of Salem - \$1,700; Hood River Community Church- \$2,100; East Side Baptist Church- \$5,300; First Presbyterian Church of Portland-\$6,000.

- During a talk addressing the superintendents of Oregon State Sunday Schools, State director of NER efforts in Oregon, J. J. Handsaker, compared the cold weather in Oregon and Armenia, and the comfort of people of Oregon vs. the condition of Armenian refugees on death marches. The former burning the fire in their house all night for comfort and the latter not being able to get

from frozen earth the roots and grass they survived on. Such a stark portrayal of the realities inspired those in attendance to donate what they could spare for NER's efforts.

- Oregon Sunday Schools gave more than \$10,000 during 1923 to NER. The First Christian Sunday School gave \$1,000 of this amount. This Sunday school raised \$700 to \$1,300 every Christmas from 1919-1923. Although they needed funds for their own building they stated: "We cannot build our Church at the cost of lives of little children in the Near East".



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- An appeal was made by the NER State office to all pupils of Oregon public schools in February 1919 on behalf of 400,000 starving orphans, asking the students to bring nickels, dimes and thrift stamps to their teacher for NER. Governor James Withycombe was the honorary chairman named on the letter.

Oregon, We Thank You!

Thanks to the generosity of the 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, Oregon, We Thank You!



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