



## AMERICA WE THANK YOU

An Armenian Tribute to Near East Relief

## WASHINGTON FACT SHEET

Washington 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.

### Mayor Edwin J. Brown of Seattle Wears Only a Barrel For A Clothing Drive For Near East Relief - 1925



- Washington facilitated its relief efforts from its headquarters at 329 Burke Building in Seattle.

- Under the leadership of Dr. Sherman L. Divine, chairman of Northwestern USA for NER, the Northwestern USA acted as foster parents to 6,750 Armenian orphan children, by providing the cost of feeding and clothing these children at \$60 per child per year. Under this impressive mercy effort West Washington provided for 2,500 orphans, East Washington and North Idaho for 1,250 orphans, South Idaho for 834 orphans, Utah for 1,250 orphans, Montana for 834 orphans and Alaska for 83

orphans, raising a total of \$405,000 annually.

- The children of Washington gave \$10,544 as a result of the Christmas Appeal campaign for NER.
- The March 11, 1921 issue of Washington's Pullman Herald included an article, which included Cleveland Dodge's description of work being done by the NER in saving the Armenians. "A nation has been saved by American philanthropy, and the generosity of American people, through the Near East Relief, in its work for Armenians," said Dodge, a New York banker, director of National City Bank and treasurer of Near East Relief. Based on the lowest estimate, one million people were saved thanks to this relief effort. The President of the Republic of Armenia, Dr. Hamo Ohandjanian sent a letter thanking America for saving Armenians from starvation. In addition, approximately 110,000 orphans were under the care of Near East Relief.



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- The January 7, 1921 edition of Pullman Herald included an article about Near East Relief having 500 relief workers in Asia Minor and the fact that the presence of these workers at relief stations was all that prevented the entire annihilation of a Christian community by the Turks. This same article noted that there were over 250,000 children without families or friends; their parents were massacred or died in deportation and if the Near East Relief did not feed and care for them, they would die. Despite the fact that the Near East Relief cared for a massive number of 110,000 orphans, for every orphan who was rescued in an orphanage, there were three that could not get in due to shortage of space and food.
- Whitman County in Washington State cared for 155 orphans, by funding \$60 for each child a year, totaling \$9,300.00. The children of public schools in Yakima (In Washington) cared for 65 orphans at a total cost of \$3,900.00 per year.
- The March 17, 1921 edition of The Lynden Tribune published an appeal by Major General Leonard Wood, for funds to save the Armenians from annihilation. “I feel that however many and however worthy the other appeals which are being made to the great heart of America these days may be, the cry of these little children cannot remain unanswered”. In his appeal General Wood stated: “I beg your personal cooperation and influence” for the Near East Relief to go on with its work of mercy toward two and half million Armenian people, the oldest Christian nation.
- Farmers of East Washington and North Idaho were asked to give 26 carloads of wheat; orchardists were asked for donation of fruits; and residents of the cities were asked for clothes and cash. West Washington gave most of its aid in flour, milk and cash.
- In the November 23, 1920 issue of The Washington Standard, Alexander Hemphill, President of Guarantee Trust Company and well-known New York banker and financier, explained the work of Near East Relief, where the money went, who directed the work, and the overall conditions. Mr. Hemphill was the chairman of the Executive Committee of Near East Relief at that time.

### **Washington, 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, Washington, We Thank You!



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