

THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION
26 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR., PRESIDENT
JEROME D. GREENE, SECRETARY

New York, October 31, 1914.

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., as President of the Rockefeller Foundation, authorizes the following statement:

" It having become clear that one of the most terrible and appealing effects of the war will fall upon the non-combatants,- those most innocent of any part in the cause or the conduct of the conflict,- the Rockefeller Foundation has determined to exert itself to the extent, if necessary, of millions of dollars, for the relief of non-combatants in the various countries involved.

" This action is taken as a natural step in fulfilling the chartered purposes of the Foundation, namely, ' to promote the well-being of mankind throughout the world.'

" I have written the American Ambassador in London that ' we foresee the probability that large resources will be very much needed for rehabilitation at a time when the resources now being drawn upon for immediate relief will be perhaps very nearly exhausted. Under the circumstances, we feel the need of further advice.'

" In order to obtain expert opinion as to the time, place and means of rendering aid most effectively, the Foundation has arranged to send to Europe within the next few days a Commission which shall visit the countries affected and advise us first hand. The Chairman of the Commission will be Mr. Wickliffe Rose, Director General of the

International Health Commission, whose successful experience in organizing the campaign against hookworm disease in various parts of the world peculiarly fits him for the task.

We are also seeking to enlist the co-operation of one or two others, experienced in the administration of relief to those in need.

The sending of such a mission will not render unnecessary the efforts of other agencies of relief, for the need is widespread and millions of people are suffering. All steps which the Rockefeller Foundation takes will, of course, be absolutely neutral.

To avoid delay and to provide relief at the earliest possible moment for the suffering people of Belgium, the Foundation has chartered the largest neutral ship available in New York Harbor, and purchased a full cargo of supplies, to be dispatched immediately.

This action will but supplement the public spirited efforts of the Belgian Relief Committee, of which Mr. Robert W. DeForest is Chairman.

That the necessity is vital and worthy of the heartiest support is indicated by the following cablegrams which, in reply to inquiries, we have received from Mr. Page, the American Ambassador at London:-

'Belgians on verge of starvation. I emphatically regard it most opportune to help. I have never known such a case of need. Committee to distribute food consists of prominent Americans here and influential Belgians in Belgium and American Minister and Consuls in Belgium, all under my direction. British Government forbids export of food and no food can be bought on continent. Help needed is food and clothing for women and children.'

' It will require a million dollars a month for seven or eight months to prevent starvation. In fact, many will starve now before food can reach them. No food can be bought and exported from any country in Europe. Every dollar you choose to give will save or prolong a human life if you give it quickly enough. No other time will come in any land when there can be greater need. Do not send money. Buy six parts wheat, two parts rice, two parts beans, and ship in neutral ships consigned to American Consul at Rotterdam. Inform me when you ship and I will arrange all diplomatic requirements for landing, for transit to Belgium and for distribution in small quantities by the Commission of Relief, which as a means of reaching all the people have taken over all grocery stores.'

" Immediately upon receiving these messages, the Rockefeller Foundation enlisted the cooperation of the shipping department of the Standard Oil Company of New York in securing the vessel, and at the same time gladly availed itself of the voluntary services of Mr. Lionel Hagenars, a Belgian now resident in New York and member of the Belgian Relief Committee, in purchasing the cargo. The Foundation encountered considerable difficulty in finding a capacious vessel, and the pressure upon the market for food stuffs was such that it was impossible to comply exactly with Ambassador Page's suggestions as to proportions. To fill and despatch the ship called for an expenditure of about \$275,000.

"On next Tuesday morning, therefore, the Massapequa, of the New York & Porto Rico Steamship Company, will sail direct to Rotterdam, Holland, laden with 4,000 tons of supplies, consigned to the American Consul. The cargo will consist of:

- 28,500 barrels of Flour
- 14,000 packets (100 lbs. each) of Rice
- 3,000 bags (200 lbs. each) of Beans
- 1,000 boxes (100 lbs. each) of Bacon

"The British Consul has kindly agreed to certify that these supplies are absolutely for the aid of non-combatants and should not be delayed in transit.

"The extraordinary need in Belgium is further indicated by the following cablegram received from Mr. H. C. Hoover, of the American Relief Committee in London:

'Have received reports from members of our Commission, from the American Minister in Brussels, and from local officials that within three weeks the last vestige of foodstuffs in Belgium will have been exhausted and the entire population of over seven million people will be faced with starvation. The minimum supply of foodstuffs required amounts to about ninety thousand tons of cereals per month, together with bacon or lard. The minimum monthly expenditure required is from four to five million dollars, of which some part returnable through sales. It therefore appears that the problem of feeding the people of Belgium transcends other Belgian relief. The one function of Americans in Belgian relief is the purchase and dispatch of food. We have expended every dollar that we have received in the purchase and dispatch of foodstuffs already, and it will take all the funds we can raise here to take care of emergency pending arrival of stuffs from America.'

"It is obvious that no philanthropic exertion will be too great to relieve the acute suffering of those victims of the war who are innocent of any participation in it.