

Maas Hotel, Rotterdam,  
January 1, 1914.5

Mr. Jerome D. Greene, Secretary,  
The Rockefeller Foundation,  
26 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Greene:

We have answered briefly by cable the questions raised in your letter of November 16th but perhaps a word more at length may not be amiss.

1) There is need for clothing both for the Belgian refugees in Holland and for Belgians in many communities in Belgium. Before going to Belgium we cabled you that second-hand clothing could not be sent ~~the~~ Belgium through Rotterdam. The government had issued an order to prevent the shipping of second-hand clothing into Rotterdam. The need for this clothing has been so urgent, however, that it is being received here and distributed in Holland and some of it is being sent on into Belgium. On our journeys over Belgium we found that in some communities practically the whole population had fled when their towns or villages were being bombarded. They carried with

Mr. Greene 2-

them only the clothing which they wore, On their return they found their houses burned or looted. in Malines, for example, about eighty per cent of all the houses were looted. Practically the whole population had fled from the city at the time of its bombardment. On their return they found themselves without clothing save the clothes which they wore. I asked a large number of people at the free "canteen" concerning their supply of clothing. What they most wanted was underwear for a change. These people are not only without clothes but are without money with which to purchase clothes. In the city of Malines the shops were looted as well as the homes so that the supply of clothing in the city is very small. Good second-hand clothing sent to Belgium will be gladly received. All kinds of clothing will be useful but if I were to lay emphasis on special kinds I should say warm underwear and sweaters.

2) The relief supplies sent into Belgium are not requisitioned by the German army. The German government has just agreed not to requisition anything in Belgium that has to be replaced by food

Mr. Greene 3-

which is being sent in. The former agreement by the German authorities not to requisition supplies sent in has been lived up to. There is every reason to believe that this new agreement will be carried out in good faith. The sending of supplies into Belgium does aid Germany indirectly in so far as it relieves Germany of supplying food to the Belgian population. Germany is having to seal food in northern France. It is doing it. The German government would be compelled to supply food to Belgium if this food were not supplied from the outside. I see no escape from this. I am convinced, however, that we should continue sending in food from the outside. If we should not do so, there would be great distress throughout Belgium.

3) The food which you have been sending is just the food required. What Belgium needs first of all is bread. The Commission for Relief in Belgium is being kept definitely informed by the Belgian National Committee as to the kinds and quantities of food needed. If changed conditions

Mr. Greene 4-

should give rise to new needs you will be advised at once.

4) As to the appeals from eastern Europe, we shall be in a position to investigate this subject within the next few days. We are not in a position at present to give you any reliable information on this subject.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Chairman.