

Cable and Telegraphic Despatches

Issued by

JEWISH CORRESPONDENCE BUREAU
JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY, INC.

114 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Telephone: Chelsea 7224

Vol. IV, #6

JANUARY 9, 1923.

CHARGES ARA NEGLECTS JEWISH INSTITUTIONS IN UKRAINE.

SOVIETS HINDER WORK IN JEWISH DISTRICTS, IS ARA REPLY.

MOSCOW, Jan. 8, (Jewish Telegraphic Agency) Returning from Kiev, Zhitomir, Berdicheff, Venitz, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Proskurov and Ekaterinoslav, the J.T.A. correspondent is in position to state that the situation of most of the Jewish institutions in these places is grave. Local leaders assert it is "intolerable". Despite the \$5,000,000 the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has given the ARA, of which \$1,250,000 was designated for children's aid, most Jewish institutions receive neither food, blankets nor sheets from the ARA. In the few institutions which do receive aid, the rations are insufficient and the children sickly and underfed.

The ARA does feed non-Jewish institutions in districts which are thickly populated by Jews. In the districts of Volhynia and Podolia no ARA kitchens are open, although the Government is ready to bear part of the cost of maintenance. In the district of Ekaterinoslav 30,000 Jews require immediate aid. Ekaterinoslav is a dying city. There is no ARA feeding in this district.

The JDC, however, maintains no feeding stations, and its children aid work is done through the agency of the "Yidescom". The latter is the executive organ of the Jewish section of the Russian Communist party. It not only engages in relief work but must safeguard the supremacy of the Jewish Communist party over Jewish affairs. Because of its close relation to the Government and because no foreign organization can afford to build up its own apparatus, it must be used by foreign Jewish agencies desiring to aid Russian Jews.

It is also ascertained that the \$10- food parcel is worth in certain sections of the Ukraine not more than \$5.- The proceeds from the sale of food parcels amounting \$2.50 each and aggregating to date almost \$2,000,000, are not being applied for the aid of hungry Jewish children. A probable solution might lie in the direct transmission of money from relatives in America to beneficiaries in Russia. It is learned on good authority that the Soviet Government does not object to the transfer of dollars, and that the cost of transmission would be only 2%. The "Yidescom", the only public body transferring money from America, charges 9%.

A large American Jewish organization not seeking profit, could easily undertake the transfer of money, which is advisable in the face of the fall of food prices and the depreciated value of food packages.

January 9, 1923.

A.R.A. REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS' CHARGE.

Colonel Wm. N. Haskell, who had been Executive Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia and Walter Lyman Brown, formerly the European Director of the ARA made the following statement to a representative of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency who called at the ARA office with copies of the cables quoted above:

"The ARA has received from the JDC approximately \$5,000,000 for relief work. Much more than this amount has been spent for relief work in the Ukraine and White Russia. The JDC knowing the established policy of the ARA in distributing its relief to the most needy regardless of race, religion or politics, decided to use the ARA as the best channel for carrying relief to that section of Russia where the Jews predominate, i.e. Ukraine and White Russia.

"These funds of the JDC have been used in two ways - one, to chiefly support the child and adult feeding program in the Ukraine and White Russia; two, to give special relief through Drs. Rosen and Bogen to Jewish people and Jewish institutions through credits arranged with the ARA. It is true that even in the Ukraine the famine conditions in the largest centers of Jewish population - except Odessa, have not been as bad as in other sections, but the relief work has undoubtedly as a whole bettered the condition of the entire Ukrainian and White-Russian population - Jew and Gentile alike.

"The Soviet Government has repeatedly and vigorously protested against our attempt to extend our work into districts more thickly populated with Jews, contending that the need there is not as great as in other places. We have had to overcome a great deal of Soviet opposition in order to work in those Jewish districts in which we are now operating. The Soviet Government pays our transportation cost and our local expenses in Russia, and they object to our working in districts where the famine is not severe.

"It is true that the value of food parcels has been fluctuating, but the average price, is above \$10-, Col. Haskell stated. "At certain periods, it even reached the value of \$42, and again it fell in October to \$14. ARA officials once heard that in certain towns in Russia food parcels could be purchased for as low as \$7. With the advent of the new harvest the price of food has fallen considerably but, undoubtedly, the price will again rise in the Spring and Summer when the present crop will have been used up. And one should not overlook the fact that importation of thousands and thousands of parcels has created in certain districts an abundance of food causing a natural decline in prices.

"It is true that the ARA does deduct one fourth of the American total from every parcel of food and distributes it for general relief, but of this every purchaser of food parcels is fully aware. We have publically announced this.

"We do not supply blankets and sheets to institutions but only to the hospitals. We obtained our medical supplies from the American Red Cross and have distributed millions of dollars worth of these supplies to hospitals, Jewish and non-Jewish alike. We have spent for this purpose alone \$7,600,000 of which over \$2,500,000 has gone or will go to the Ukraine and White Russia.

"The ARA does not undertake to transmit money to Russia and no recognized institution is doing it, there being no sufficient evidence that this can be done with safety."

YIDGESCOM EXPLAINS TRANSFER CHARGES

"The All Russian Jewish Public Committee (Yidgescom), which undertakes the transfer of money through its Berlin office, charges 10% for such transfer", is the official statement of the Yidgescom in reply to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Correspondent's assertion that money could be transferred more cheaply. "This 10% include, firstly, expenses of the Yidgescom in forwarding the money from Berlin and of its delivery to the addressee located mostly in towns of White Russia and Ukraina; secondly, for payment of the general Jewish relief work; thirdly, to cover the special charge which the Government bank of Soviet Russia makes for paying out dollars. Money transferred through the Yidgescom is everywhere paid out in dollars, the time required for such transfer being from six to eight weeks."

EXPULSION OF "ALIEN" JEWS FROM LITHUANIA

Kowna (Jewish Telegraphic Agency). The mass expulsion of "alien" Jews from Lithuania has recommenced. The official interpretation of alienage includes also Jews belonging to the Wilna district as well as the so-called occupied territory of Lithuania. Jews with records of long and continued residence and those who control large business are indiscriminately subjected to the expulsion act. The intervention of the Ministry for Jewish Affairs has proved futile.

REQUEST LEAGUE TO PROTEST JEWISH DISABILITIES

Prague (Jewish Correspondence Bureau). Representatives of Hungarian Jewish organizations have filed protests with the Secretariat of the League of Nations against the discrimination of Jewish students in Hungarian universities, the Jewish Correspondence Bureau authoritatively learns. The League of Nations is requested to ask the Hungarian Government to give the basis ~~xxxxxx~~ for this discrimination and to state what it is prepared to do in order to rectify it.

WARN UKRAINIAN JEWS TO AVOID POLAND

Warsaw (J. C. B.). Emigrants from Russia and the Ukraine, arriving in Poland being in danger of immediate internment, the Jewish Ukrainian Committee of Warsaw has asked these emigrants to avoid Polish territory in transit. Lithuania and Latvia are suggested as more suitable for transmigration.