

**American Hospital\***  
**Konia, Turkey**

Copy

May 6, 1915

Hon. Henry Morgenthau,  
U.S. Ambassador to Turkey.

My Dear Sir:

I have just received your telegram saying that you had received no telegram from me sent on Sunday. It was to this effect: 2,000 Armenian refugees from Zeitoun and vicinity are here. Can you give them aid through me? It was addressed to the American Red Cross through you. I presume you are not without knowledge of the facts but I will give you what I know. These people have been brought here during a week past, several hundred every night, on the train. From Tarsus to Bozanti they went on foot. They are principally women and children. My first information was that they were all women and children and old men, but I found that was not so. They have bedding and clothing to a certain extent but very insufficient. They have absolutely no cooking utensils, and for a month since they started have had absolutely nothing to eat but bread and sometimes some olives and cheese. The Government has been giving them one loaf of bread a piece per day, but nothing for children under five years old. There are now 4,000 here.

I went to the Police Mudir and asked permission to see them and was refused. The second time I went permission was granted, a police officer being present, so that I could get very little information. I went again and asked permission to give aid to them in the name of the Red Cross. Since this is a Red Cross Hospital I considered myself sufficiently authorized to use the name, and intended to do something with contributions raised here. The Armenians begged me to undertake it, putting their contributions into my hands, as Red Cross funds. The Mudir refused permission, telling me to wait until the Vali should come. The Vali came last night, and I called on him today. He told me that they were not in any need, and that I would not be allowed to give aid. I asked to see them and he refused. He told me that they are all to be sent elsewhere tomorrow, declining to say where. It has been said by the officials that they are to be distributed among the villages, a few families in each place. This to my mind means destruction to them all. It is a massacre in another form. They have no means of existence, the villagers, all Turks, cannot be expected to feed them, the Government rations cannot be continued in the villages.

Here they have been crowded into house and schools, and so close that it was

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\* Source: LC/HM(Sr.)/Reel 7/557

difficult to find space to get about. That they were famishingly hungry and utterly wretched I have evidence both from my own eyesight, and testimony of others. A Turk this morning described some of it that he had seen. They are kept hundred in these few places with soldiers on guard at the door. In going from the station they are driven by the soldiers, who beat the women and even prod them on with their bayonets. The crying of the children, the women almost falling and being pushed on by the guards, the scanty clothing, make a sight that one does not want to see again. The Turks in market greeted them with "Are not these Giaours dead yet" and other such remarks. A baby was born on the train last night, but the mother threw it out of the window that its sufferings might end at once.

As far as I could learn there are but 70 families from Zeitoun itself, and the rest being from neighboring villages. It seems that their cattle came with them as far as Bozanti, and has remained there, a prey to robbers or to the military requisition.

I would beg for aid for them from the Red Cross, and if you could secure a peremptory order to allow me to give it, perhaps I might succeed, but I confess that when they are scattered far and wide, under the present conditions of Government, I do not see how it would be possible. I reminded the Vali that two years ago I distributed a large amount of aid to the Moslem refugees who came here, and that it was not a matter of nationality but of human suffering. He only said that their soldiers needed clothing more [than] these Armenians.

We hear all sorts of rumors of the state of things in Constantinople at this time, and I understand well, that it may be entirely out of the question to do anything at all in this matter, even in the way of giving relief.

I wrote you a brief letter to-day and sent it by registered post, but have little hope of its reaching you.\* I am keeping this to send by some special opportunity. I went to the Telegraph office and demanded the return of my money for the "Mustajel" telegram sent to you. They looked up the record and assured me that it had been sent from here, and any fault must be inquired into at Constantinople. I enclose the receipt for you to use if you think it worth while to complain of your telegrams not being delivered to you.

The young girl who was a teacher in the Bot [Protestant] School in Afion Kara Hissar arrived here last night to take refuge with us. She reports 60 of the prominent men of the Botstants [Protestants] and Gregorians exiled from there. In Konia men are wondering how soon their turn will come.

A train load of wounded from Constantinople is to arrive here tomorrow. I am sending out twenty of my patients in order to make room to receive some.

With best regards  
Sincerely yours,

William S. Dodd

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\* See LC/HM(Sr.)/Reel 7/555