1956 Annual Report

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
1956 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

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Not Peace and Not War
Moses A. Leavitt, Executive Vice-Chairman

Each year, when the Joint Distribution Committee presents its program and budget for the year ahead, there is included a warning: subject to change in the event of emergencies. There have been many such emergencies—the establishment of a new state, the eruption of anti-Semitic violence, a trial of doctors, the “temporary” opening of a border, the outbreak of a “small” war.

At the beginning of November 1956 revolt in Hungary brought tens of thousands of refugees to Austria, among them thousands of Jews. About a month later a series of actions against Jews in Egypt—economic restrictions, internments and direct expulsions—set into being a mass emigration movement.

Both groups of refugees turned—as had tens of thousands of men, women and children since 1914—confidently to the sheltering arms of the JDC. And JDC was there—with food, clothing, medical care, with affection and encouragement.

It has been said that the history of the JDC is, in microcosm, the history of world Jewry during the past four decades.

But that is only a part of the JDC story. For JDC’s history is also the history of every catastrophe, every upheaval and every disaster which has overtaken the peoples of the world since the shot at Sarajevo.

And in its response to these, the world’s agonies, JDC reflects also the coming-of-age of American Jewry, the transformation of the newcomer—and his children—into the foremost bearers of the age-old tradition of tzedakah and brotherhood.

The year 1956 reflected the turmoil which has, in our time, beset such widely-varying milieus as a hill-village in the Moroccan hinterland, an ancient city near the Dead Sea, the borders of half a dozen countries in the heart of Europe. The bitter fruits of turmoil and disaster can be found today in a reception center for refugees in Austria, in a hospital for war-victims in Israel, in a crowded camp for North African Jews on the outskirts of Marseilles.

But bitterness is not all: there is also a new clinic for expectant mothers in Tehran, a newly-established summer vacation home for Jewish children in Germany, new Jewish community centers in Italy, as well as France and Norway; there is the amputee in Israel who is earning his own livelihood for the first time in nearly twenty years.

Such has been the nature of JDC’s responsibilities since its earliest days, so many and so varied the tasks which have been entrusted to it, that in all of these places—and more—men and women in need—through no fault of their own—have turned trustingly to JDC as to an old and reliable friend.

And JDC, in the name of American Jewry, has been there with its answer.

In Israel, whose government was increasingly concerned with other problems, 1956 saw the consolidation of Malben, the JDC welfare program on behalf of aged, ill and handicapped newcomers. Particularly in the field of care for the aged, JDC continued to shoulder the burden which might otherwise have fallen upon a harassed population struggling to establish economic bases.

In Algeria, as the fight between nationalist forces and the French administration cost the lives of several Jews and threatened the economic position of the Jewish community of the country, increased JDC aid began to loom more and more important.

In Morocco, the mass movement of Jews to Israel was cut to a trickle by the newly independent Moroccan government; those who remained, in many cases the most helpless, were in ever greater need of the aid which JDC supplies, aid which means life and health for thousands.

In France, a corollary to the aggravation of the precarious lot of Jews in North Africa was the problem of new refugees arriving in increasing numbers from Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and, toward the end of the year, from Egypt. Some crowded into already-bulging reception centers; others were increasingly dependent for survival upon assistance provided by French Jewish welfare organizations.

And in recent years Austria has been given a new role; for there has been a small but noticeable liberalization of emigration policies in Eastern Europe. As a result, Austria has become a transit station for small numbers of Jews from Hungary, Poland and even the Soviet Union, all bound for Israel.

Always throughout JDC’s existence it had been prepared to cope with the effects of world crisis and of major emergency. But to those living from day to day, the future was very often less important than a hot meal, a bandage, a pair of shoes, a hospital bed, a place to sleep.

In 1956, therefore, JDC’s aid reached more
than 179,000 men, women and children throughout the world, more than 103,000 of them in Moslem countries. Not included in this number were those who were aided to emigrate to Israel, a large majority of them from Moslem countries. JDC aid included: cash relief for 21,000; feeding aid for 70,000; 5,300 in homes for the aged; medical aid for 40,000; 10,000 aided in children's institutions; 62,000 attending JDC-supported schools; and 30,000 benefiting from other types of JDC cultural activities.

Among the year's major developments on the JDC scene were:

¶ Continued aid for thousands of men and women, particularly the aged, by Malben, the JDC welfare program in Israel. During the year Malben opened a new hospital for chronic cases at Nahariya and a home for the aged at Rishon LeZion.

¶ Continued support for the revival of existing Jewish communities in Europe, largely with funds provided by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. Capital investments — new community centers, children's homes and other communal institutions — required JDC expenditures of about $600,000 during the year. On May 2nd and 3rd a conference of Jewish community leaders from 12 European countries devoted itself exclusively to advance planning in this area.

¶ The establishment of two new loan institutions—one in Duesseldorf, Germany, and one in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the latter in cooperation with the Jewish Colonization Association, to add to the existing network of credit cooperatives. During the first six months of the year the 31 JDC-sponsored loan institutions in 16 countries granted some 5,600 loans amounting to more than $2,150,000.

¶ The distribution in areas of JDC opera-
tions of 4,779,675 pounds of U. S. Department of Agriculture surplus food worth $915,114. More than 85,200 persons benefited, 44,400 of them in North Africa.

The emigration to Israel of 54,384 men, women and children, including 45,853 from Moslem countries, chiefly North Africa; 7,003 from Eastern Europe and the rest from Western Europe and other areas.

Increased aid to children and young people in many areas: three new kindergartens were opened by local communities in Morocco; two educational institutions by Ozar Hatorah in Tangier, Germany; a mother-and-child health center in Shiraz, Iran, and a summer camp for 250 underprivileged Jewish boys in that country.

The continuance of specialized assistance and special projects in various fields, including special grants for Passover relief and the provision of summer vacations for youngsters in many areas. A new and modern OSE dispensary was completed in the Tunis ghetto; an assistance program was introduced for 6,500 adults in 20 Moroccan communities; a Jewish educational conference in October brought together professional educators from 14 countries in continental Europe to plan for the future; surveys in various fields attempted to establish standards for feeding programs, for mental health and for cash relief. Passover relief included 332,898 pounds of matzoth, matzoth meal and other Passover food as well as Passover wine to Jews in 11 countries.

Continued cooperation with other Jewish organizations. This included a grant of $1,450,000 to the worldwide vocational training activities of ORT (Organization for Rehabilitation through Training) and a sum of nearly $1,000,000 for the migration work of the United Hias Service.

Of the more than $30,000,000 which JDC spent during 1956 for its operations in various countries, Israel alone accounted for some $13,000,000, or more than 43 per cent. This, of itself, indicates the continued scope of JDC activities in the Jewish state, particularly its medical and welfare program on behalf of aged, ill and handicapped newcomers, known as Malben. During the year some 35,000 men, women and children received JDC aid in Israel in one form or another, most of them in one or other of more than 100 Malben old-age homes, hospitals, sanitariums, clinics, sheltered workshops and other installations, or through Malben rehabilitation loans.

The number of institutionalized patients and aged under Malben care remained almost stable in 1956—it even decreased by about 200 persons. This stability, however, is more apparent than real. It does not reflect the absorption of nearly 1,500 men and women in the N'vei Avoth (Pardess Hanna) reception center, which was taken over from the Jewish Agency in November 1955.

During 1956, the N'Vei Avoth camp was converted into a modern village for the aged. Those of the original residents who could not be placed in the permanent buildings constructed on the camp grounds were transferred to other Malben institutions.

Two new Malben institutions were added in 1956—a hospital for chronic cases at Nahariya and a home for the aged at Rishon LeZion. At the end of 1956, Malben institutionalized cases included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Care</th>
<th>Number of Institutions</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TB Hospitals</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Hospitals</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Disease Hospitals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Institutions</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions for Retarded Children</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions for the Infirm</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homes for the Aged</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4,103</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of December 31, Malben employed 2,065 persons, including 102 physicians, 488 nurses and nurses' aides and 31 social workers. In addition, 90 nurses had been graduated from four in-service nurses' training courses and 184 persons were still attending ten such courses.

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Easily one of Malben's greatest contributions has been toward the successful battle against tuberculosis in Israel. The participation of all agencies active in the field of TB in the TB Coordination Committee has brought about a more rational utilization of existing facilities and has reduced the waiting list to manageable proportions. Malben had closed its TB institution at Gedera in 1955; in 1956 Nevei Chaim was converted from a TB institution into a home for the aged.

Malben has also agreed to participate in a coordinated plan for preventive work in the TB field—through chest clinics and home care—to avoid duplication of services. With the results reached by Malben in the TB field, a transfer of this part of its work to the Israel Government has been decided upon.

Apart from TB care, Malben maintains four hospitals for chronic diseases. As an indication of the thoroughness of Malben care, the new
modern hospital at Nahariya, when completed, will consist of nine pavilions, five for patients with 55 beds each and four for administration, an out-patient clinic, recreation room, occupational therapy, x-ray clinic, laboratory, dining hall and other facilities.

In regard to the treatment of chronically ill patients, too, plans are being made to coordinate with the Ministry of Health, in the same way as was done in the field of TB care. A survey of chronic cases is now being conducted by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the World Health Organization and JDC to provide data for a final decision on these plans.

With regard to mental health, JDC decided to participate in the mental health program recommended in a survey made in September 1956. This includes a building project for mental hospitals in Israel, and JDC has agreed to meet 50 per cent of the building program's requirements.

Malben also provides medical care in its dispensaries to some 150 persons monthly and dental services in 16 dental stations to 135 persons a month.

But it should be noted that 68 per cent of those institutionalized by Malben are healthy (4,103) or infirm (436) aged. The taking over last year of the transient camp at Pardess Hanna from the Jewish Agency meant a passage of responsibility to JDC of some 1,500 additional aged men and women. There were, in addition, nearly 2,000 persons on the waiting list for admission to homes for the aged, and many hundreds are still waiting for non-existent places in these homes. To provide more room and in line with modern theories of care for the aged outside of institutions, Malben has conceived a plan to set up 200 small apartments, which consist of one room and kitchenette, for aged couples.
A more thorough attack upon the problem of care for the aged was a Malben-sponsored conference in August 1956 of all agencies active in the field of old-age care, at which it was decided to found the Israel Gerontological Society.

In the field of rehabilitation, Malben issued 358 prosthetic appliances, placed 191 handicapped immigrants on jobs, employed 583 persons a month, including 125 sightless men and women, in its 23 sheltered workshops; provided occupational therapy for 500 persons a month, mainly in TB and chronic disease hospitals; gave handicraft training to some 900 persons, mostly in homes for the aged; and provided institutional services for between 800 and 900 a month.

But by far the most important activity in this field was the continued program of reconstruction loans which, during 1956, had been granted to 788 family heads—a total of 3,161 beneficiaries. It is noteworthy that since the initiation of this program in June 1950, nearly 22,200 men, women and children have benefited from it.

In search of additional means of making the handicapped self-supporting, Malben also signed an agreement with the Ministry of Posts according to which 200 post office-telephone booths will be set up, with services to be provided by handicapped newcomers. The first 50 booths are now being constructed in the Malben sheltered workshop in Machne Israel.

The Malben cultural program also includes Hebrew classes for 530 persons a month, lectures attended by 3,600 monthly, record concerts for over 4,000 a month, over 50 movies a month and a library which was visited by an average of 1,300 readers monthly.

In addition to its Malben program, JDC supports another sizeable program in Israel which provides aid to more than 12,000. Additional JDC aid to cultural and religious institutions today includes support of 81 yeshivot with 6,770 students, six research projects and aid to some 1,700 refugee rabbis, cantors and their families.

At the beginning of 1956, it appeared as if the once sizeable problem of refugees and transients in Europe had largely been solved. Of all JDC beneficiaries then receiving cash relief in Europe, only 3 per cent were considered transients.

But less than a year later the new influx into Western Europe from Hungary and from Egypt had brought thousands of helpless newcomers to JDC.

By the end of December, JDC was caring for nearly 11,000 Hungarian refugees in Austria, with 3,000 others having departed for various countries. Because of lack of space in camps operated by the Austrian Government and the League of Red Cross Societies, JDC had to assume the responsibility for sheltering and feeding these refugees. Many were placed in hotels, others in private dwellings and the rest in reception centers, the most important of which was the Fridtjof Nansen Home in Bad Kreuzen, a gift from Norway to Austria and used for Hungarian refugee relief. In addition, JDC supported two kosher kitchens in Vienna and provided kosher food for Jewish residents of the camps. It is estimated that JDC spent more than $400,000 for Hungarian Jewish refugees in the last two months of 1956.

The mass emigration movement of Egyptian Jews which started at the end of November 1956 found thousands of refugees turning up—some completely unexpectedly—in France, Belgium, Italy, Greece and other countries of Europe. To help these emigrants, JDC advanced sizeable funds to the International Red Cross which undertook the chartering of ships for their transportation. When the refugees arrived in Europe, JDC, working through French, Italian and other communal Jewish organizations, provided shelter, food, care and medical treatment.

One notable advance toward liquidating the refugee problem was achieved, however, during the year. The relatively tiny DP population of Camp Foehrenwald was considerably decreased, notably through the emigration of some 250 and the integration in German communities of 473 men, women and children. By the end of 1956, only 261 residents remained in Foehrenwald and the camp was scheduled to be closed at the end of February 1957.

Few of those being aided by JDC in Europe receive their aid directly from JDC—most of this aid is channeled through existing Jewish organizations. Of those receiving cash relief, however, it is interesting to note that 21 per cent are under 18 and 32 per cent are 60 years of age and over.

A country by country breakdown would show: exclusive of aid to the newly-arrived Hungarian refugees in Austria, the Vienna Kultusgemeinde, partly supported by JDC, has a welfare case load of 670 persons a month and maintains a home for the aged and a hospital. JDC's direct activities include assistance to some 600 persons a month, subvention of a canteen and support of seven schools.

In Belgium, JDC-supported agencies assist 1,350 persons a month, maintain two children's homes, a canteen and a home for the aged and provide medical aid for 500-600 persons a month. During 1956 a special drive was
launched in Brussels to collect funds to be used for housing people who are still living in hideouts they found during the Nazi occupation.

In France, JDC-aided agencies provide financial assistance to more than 5,000 persons in Paris, Marseilles and Strasbourg, including refugees from North Africa. Other services rendered by these agencies include 15 children's and youth homes, five full-time and several supplementary schools, two canteens, medical aid for 3,500 and various cultural and educational activities including a youth center in Paris. In addition, JDC gives direct assistance to 475 persons.

In Germany, JDC aid, either directly or through the Zentralwohlfahrtsstelle, reached 2,065 persons monthly. The ZWST financed 11 homes for the aged and nine nurseries. In July, with JDC's assistance, it opened the Henrietta Szold Children's Home at Wembach as a vacation home for Jewish children. A community center in Frankfurt is nearing completion.

In Italy, JDC provides direct aid for 500 refugees. In addition, over 1,500 native-born Jews are on the relief rolls of JDC-supported local Jewish communities, which also provide lunches for some 680 school children. The JDC-financed OSE medical organization treats some 3,000 persons. Six children's institutions (270 children), three schools (1,020 pupils) and a rabbinical seminary benefit from JDC assistance. In Italy, as in France, hundreds of Egyptian refugees were being aided by local groups with JDC support.

Smaller JDC assistance programs of one kind or another are still being continued on behalf of 1,000 in Sweden, 750 in Yugoslavia, 600 in Switzerland, 110 in Portugal and Spain, and 50 in Norway. In Greece, 310 persons a month receive cash relief, 160 medical aid and 135 children receive meals. Special aid was provided
in this country to the victims of earthquakes during the past few years.

**Aid in Moslem Countries**

Throughout the areas of what was formerly French North Africa, Arab nationalism has largely altered hitherto existing relationships. In Algeria the "unofficial" war between the Arabs and the French administration is still going on, but Tunisia and Morocco have already acquired sovereignty. In all these areas the situation of the Jews continues to be extremely unstable and vulnerable.

In Algeria, when the Jews did not align themselves with the Nationalists, there was a resort to violence. A hand grenade was tossed into a café in Constantine and 13 persons were wounded; a synagogue was burned in Orleansville, and synagogues in Batna and Marna were attacked. In reprisal Jews shot several Arabs in Constantine.

In Morocco, many Jewish officials have been dismissed. Jewish professional people are losing their clients. Many Jews, worried about their future, want to emigrate and Jewish organizations have set up a special committee to plan emigration to France. In June, however, the Moroccan Government ordered the dissolution of the Cadima Society, which was engaged in helping Jews emigrate to Israel, and curtailed mass emigration. For several weeks no departures were permitted from the Cadima camp near Casablanca where many Israel visa holders waited hopefully for an opportunity to depart.

The camp, which normally aided 1,000 to 1,200 persons, had between 6,000 and 7,000 residents in June and July. To alleviate this situation, JDC provided blankets, sheets, soap and U. S. Department of Agriculture supplies, as well as clothing for 500 children in the camp. In August, the Moroccan authorities acceded to a gradual evacuation of the Cadima camp, and by the end of September its entire population had been permitted to depart.

In Tunisia, the community structure has remained intact and the Jewish population continues to be represented by the Federation of Jewish Communities. In Morocco, however, Jewish communal life is much less organized. The Council of Jewish Communities there has lost its representative character and its contact with the authorities.

**Morocco** continues to be one of the largest of all JDC country programs in terms of numbers, with approximately 54,000 men, women and children receiving JDC aid during 1956.

Due to the influx of fear-driven Jews from smaller communities, Jewish communities in larger cities are faced with increased welfare loads. Moreover, since the relatively fit and healthy are emigrating, those left behind are more in need of support; consequently in some communities as much as 50 per cent of the Jewish population is on the relief rolls.

In the city of Mazagan, for instance, out of a total of 3,000 Jews, 1,600 emigrated. Of the remaining 1,400, almost 800 are in need of assistance.

To meet the requests for help, early in 1956 JDC inaugurated an assistance program for adults which reaches 6,500 persons monthly in 20 communities. Some 24,125 children monthly were fed in various canteens during the school year; JDC-sponsored OSE clinics treated 7,875 persons a month; 3,475 children were aided through 17 kindergartens, five baby centers and two other child care organizations. More than 37,000 pupils attended 156 JDC-
supported schools of the Alliance Israelite Universelle, the Ozar Hatorah, Lubavitcher and others; 10,800 persons benefited from educational and cultural activities, including Hebrew classes.

Tunisia also continued to bulk large in the JDC program, with a total of 22,500 receiving aid. This aid included feeding in canteens for 5,290 children monthly; OSE and other dispensaries treated 4,500 persons a month; 20 children's institutions, including baby centers, cared for 1,820 children a month; 21 schools of the Alliance and the local communities were attended by 5,170 pupils and courses in modern Hebrew by 2,900 students.

Beneficiaries in other North African areas included 3,100 in Tangier, 3,000 in the northern zone of Morocco and 1,300 in Algeria.

In Iran, the only Moslem country outside of North Africa in which JDC maintains a country director and a country program, the situation continued to be relatively calm and advances were beginning to be seen. A total of 17,000 men, women and children in Iran receive JDC aid, but the stress is placed on assistance for children and young people. The number of children fed in school canteens was 5,700 a month. Out of a total enrollment of 11,665 in the schools of Alliance and Ozar Hatorah, some 7,000 received clothing. Medical and public health activities through 22 JDC-assisted institutions reached 9,825 a month.

In 1956 JDC continued to expand its close cooperation with local and international voluntary organizations, and with governmental agencies as well. In addition to its financial support for the work of ORT and the United Hias Service, JDC continued to cooperate with the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA) in the establishment of credit cooperatives; with OSE, the worldwide Jewish medical organization, and with such educational agencies as the Alliance Israelite Universelle and Ozar Hatorah in Moslem countries.

JDC also cooperates with governmental bodies in the field of refugee integration, and with such agencies as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the U. S. Escapee Program and the International Committee for European Migration.

It is of some interest that even today JDC programs continue to deal with small groups of European refugees in such far-flung areas as Australia, China, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, the Philippines and Brazil. The most important are Australia, with 500 beneficiaries, and China with 175 beneficiaries.

**Contributions to JDC**

Funds from the United Jewish Appeal continued to provide the financial mainstay of JDC's overseas programs in 1956. Final figures will of course not be available for some time, but by the end of the year it is estimated that American Jews had contributed approximately $16,170,000 to JDC through the nationwide campaigns of the UJA. This represents more than 53 per cent of the $30,366,849 appropriated by JDC for its 1956 operations.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany for the third year provided a substantial source of income for JDC's efforts, specifically on behalf of individuals who suffered at the hands of the Nazis. The $7,010,300
which the Claims Conference provided during 1956 represented slightly more than 23 per cent of JDC's total budget.

These funds, which the Claims Conference receives under its agreement with the German Government, are earmarked for the relief and rehabilitation of Jewish victims of Nazism.

There were also a number of communities outside of the United States which provided financial assistance to JDC programs during the past year. These included Canada, which provided approximately $500,000 by year's end, and Latin American communities. JDC also received considerable funds from other sources, including the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization ($1,566,100) and the Jewish Trust Corporation ($1,197,200); governmental and intergovernmental agencies ($89,600); and the Jewish Agency, which provided $400,000 for the Pardess Hanna program.

Questions—and No Answers

To those familiar with JDC's activities in its 42 years of existence, and particularly in the period since World War II, the year 1956 was a year like many another, an "ordinary" year. Even the influx of refugees during the last two months of the year was, to an agency which had assisted in the reception, the care and the emigration of hundreds of thousands of refugees in earlier days, an "ordinary" phenomenon.

Certain it is that the events of October and November in the Middle East and Eastern Europe—the outbreak of armed conflicts—will have effects and repercussions far beyond their beginning. It is no exaggeration to say that for the Jews of many areas they will mean special
difficulties. For in country after country the Jew is in the helpless minority, helpless sometimes even to the point of being unable to defend himself. History is replete with instances of the Jew-as-scapegoat and this is apparently a fashion which has not yet become outmoded. It is anticipated that in 1957 some 125,000 Jewish refugees will be moving to countries of temporary asylum and to new homes. Among these will be men, women and children from Egypt, from Hungary, from North Africa and from other areas.

How then shall JDC plan for its work in the months ahead on behalf of Jews in the Moslem world? And how shall JDC prepare, what shall JDC build, where shall it make its greatest efforts?

The Jew of Eastern Europe is in another category. Where in North Africa and in other Moslem areas it is a matter of choosing among all the things which need to be done to find those things which need doing the most, in Eastern Europe there is so little that can be done that JDC stands prepared to do everything possible—and will do it.

But from Eastern Europe there will be some who will find the way to leave; and who will arrive in Austria, or in Germany, penniless, hungry, weary, sometimes crippled or sick. Help must be found for them; and for the harassed remnants of earlier flights and other wars who still find themselves in Europe today.

In Israel, it is JDC's task to do its mission of mercy on behalf of the most helpless. Nearly all of those whom JDC aids in the Jewish state are aged, ill or handicapped, or their dependents. Many of them could never have come to Israel but for the existence of Malben, able and willing to receive them; they must continue to receive aid in order to survive.

And were there no Malben, this additional burden would fall upon the already-laden shoulders of the people of Israel. That statement speaks for itself.

We are living today in a special kind of Limbo, a life which is not peace and not war. In this kind of existence, long-range planning of any kind is difficult; but planning which involves the lives and security of human beings is a responsibility of the weightiest kind.

Yet this is the responsibility to which the JDC of today is heir. No matter what, JDC and its staff will continue to execute this responsibility to the limit of their resources and their capacity.

But it is a source of much-needed strength and confidence to know that in this endeavor JDC continues to speak with the complete support of American Jewry. For never was such support needed more.
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O NLY a few months ago talk of war virtually filled the pages of our newspapers. It has now subsided, but for most of us thoughts of war are never far from our minds, no matter what our daily occupations.

But even when the sound of the guns is loudest, we cannot permit their roar to drown out other sounds — the cries of the hungry, the orphaned, the helpless.

For we — the members of the JDC National Council — can never permit ourselves to forget that simultaneously with every shooting war, with every other catastrophe, there is the unceasing battle which must be fought against starvation and misery and ignorance and disease.

Nor dare we forget that we are among those who have enlisted themselves, with or without title or rank, in this humanitarian army for the duration of the emergency.

Because the weapons of the enemy are so powerful, we each of us have many and varied duties to perform. As Chairman of your National Council I know many of you personally. I know the work which you perform every day in your communities on behalf of every worthy cause. I know how unselfishly you give of yourselves for the needy and less fortunate.

But in the battle which JDC has been carrying on for 42 years at the behest of the American Jewish community, you must serve both as a member of the general staff and as one of the shock troops. In your own community it must be you who organize the lines of support and supply to provide the maximum aid possible. But you must also undertake to make clear, as often as is necessary, the nature of the enemy, the history of the battle, the objectives we have set before us.

No matter how difficult the battle, I think that we have much reason never to be discouraged. For those whom we aid become, by virtue of the help we have given them, our allies in the battles which follow. Through our efforts we arm them — not with guns, but with knowledge. We give them strength and courage. We are an army of liberation — our every effort helps to free them from the shackles of poverty and ignorance.

Every day we enlist in our army new recruits, at our most forward positions as well as on the home front. Our history is full of the names of victories which we have already won. And if we continue our efforts in the future as we have in the past, other victories are no less certain.