

American Philanthropy in Action: The American Red Cross in Greece, 1918–1923

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The entry of the United States into the First World War was the decisive factor that gave the Allies indisputable superiority over the Central Powers and soon after determined the outcome of the war. Yet, although the great U.S. military and economic support contributed the catalytic energy for the Allied victory, U.S. humanitarian efforts, in the form of joint private and government relief missions, left the more lasting impression upon the European people. The American Red Cross banner became the distinctive symbol of American humanitarian involvement in the European war. The organization's war and postwar operations can serve as a case study of a philanthropic agency that, while fulfilling its humanitarian task, became at the same time a major political instrument of U.S. postwar influence in Europe.

The U.S. government viewed the relief activities of American philanthropic agencies and the financial aid committed to rebuilding the European countries in the postwar era as the most effective means of stimulating Europe's recovery and strengthening the Old World's commitment to democratic values and institutions.¹ A steady flow of U.S. capital, along with large-scale humanitarian assistance to civilians in distress, would help alleviate the effects of the war, strengthen European parliamentary institutions, relieve the social and economic grievances of millions of civilians, and contain Bolshevism, impeding its spread into East Central Europe. In return, this form of American intervention was

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1. On the political and diplomatic content of U.S. humanitarian aid to belligerent Europe, see Benjamin M. Weissman, *Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Soviet Russia: 1921–1923* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1974), 29; David Burner, *Herbert Hoover: A Public Life* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1979), 120–25; Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).

to ensure continuous American prosperity in the postwar era as well as recognition of the ascending U.S. power. In this context, while the U.S. armed forces were demobilized immediately after the armistice, and the U.S. government returned to its policy of diplomatic nonentanglement in European affairs, American philanthropic organizations continued their relief work among millions of dislocated European civilians.

The American Red Cross (ARC) humanitarian work in Greece during the First World War was not of significant scale. However, the organization's relief and rehabilitation work in that country in the aftermath of the war became one of the most extensive ARC missions in postwar Europe. Civilian displacement, the influx of large numbers of refugees, and the threat of contagious diseases prompted ARC intervention in Greece twice: the first operation was carried out from 1918 to 1921 and the second, more dramatic undertaking from 1922 to 1923. In both instances ARC offered emergency relief and rehabilitation assistance to refugees or dislocated civilians, as well as valuable technical advice and expertise to help the Greek government in the reorganization of public health and social welfare institutions.

The two stages of ARC humanitarian work in Greece in the aftermath of the First World War will be traced here, and its effect upon the refugees, upon the Greek society, and upon the U.S. presence in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean will be evaluated.

Postwar Civilian Relief and Rehabilitation: 1918–1920

At its founding in 1881 ARC defined its humanitarian mission as both national and international. Its incorporation by the U.S. Congress in 1900 further stressed the organization's international role and mandated its close cooperation with the U.S. government during its foreign missions.²

Until the outbreak of the First World War ARC developed its infrastructure as a national relief agency. Its international involvement remained rather limited until the war. One noteworthy international undertaking was its dispensation of relief to the armies of all belligerent

2. The agency's international missions are carried out under the supervision of the U.S. government. For more descriptive studies of ARC missions abroad, see Patrick F. Gilbo, *The American Red Cross: The First Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1981); Foster Rhea Dulles, *The American Red Cross: A History* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950); Charles Hurd, *The Compact History of the American Red Cross* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1959).

countries during the Balkan Wars, 1912–13. An ARC mission participated in the International Relief Agency set up in Belgrade, Serbia by the International Committee of the Red Cross. During the Balkan Wars ARC provided relief to Greek people for the first time, pledging a minor contribution to the Greek armies and refugees in Macedonia.³

ARC aid during the Balkan Wars was minuscule in comparison with the agency's involvement in Europe during the First World War. The war became the major testing ground for ARC's performance as an international relief organization. President Woodrow Wilson decided that ARC was to represent the United States as its major relief agency in the theater of war. From 1914 to April 1917—the period of American neutrality—ARC sought to maintain its impartiality by providing relief without discrimination to all belligerent countries. The United States' entry into the war in April 1917 signaled a modification in the organization's humanitarian role on the front. It became an auxiliary of the U.S. armed forces and undertook the responsibility of bringing relief and comfort to the American troops as well as to the armies and peoples of the Entente countries. Civilian relief in the lands controlled by the adversaries was terminated, while on the war front assistance was limited to the enemy wounded in action.⁴

Greece entered the conflict in June 1917 on the Entente side. Two months later ARC offered its humanitarian service to Greek people in a minor way and in circumstances unrelated to the war.⁵ A large fire broke out in Salonika on 18 August 1917, destroyed the city's commercial center, and left 70,000 people, almost a third of the city's population, homeless. This acute housing shortage, especially among the Jewish inhabitants of Salonika, was alleviated temporarily by the Greek authorities, the British army, and local voluntary agencies. The ARC unit stationed in the city established three soup kitchens in the sections of the city where the fire had caused the most serious damage. Though

3. In total, ARC contributed \$2,000 for the victims of the Balkan Wars. Of that amount, \$500 was forwarded to the U.S. consul in Salonika to use within his jurisdiction. See Chairman of ARC Central Committee to the secretary of state, 12 December 1912, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hence NA) 867.1421/17.

4. Dulles, *Red Cross*, 143.

5. At that point the Greek political leadership was deeply divided over Greece's entry in the war. The pro-Entente faction, headed by Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, was opposed by the royalist camp headed by King Constantine. Though an advocate of Greek neutrality, the latter did not hide his pro-German sympathy. In that context, the State Department's order to ARC was to provide relief assistance to Greeks only in the area of Macedonia where Entente troops were stationed. See ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1918*.

the actual ARC relief assistance was not extensive, the organization's rapid response to the emergency made a favorable impression on the local Greek authorities. Its soup kitchens set an example for individuals and organizations to follow, and the city authorities publicly expressed their satisfaction with the ARC initiative.⁶

When the war ended in November 1918, the U.S. government announced definite plans for the conclusion of both American military and civilian relief operations by 1 March 1919.⁷ Some 2,000 ARC workers were then administering relief overseas and generally expected to be withdrawn from Europe immediately after the termination of hostilities. At the same time, the United States was becoming increasingly concerned about the spread of Bolshevik ideology in the politically unstable areas of Europe. According to Foster Rhea Dulles, relief workers in the field pressured the ARC Central Committee not to curtail relief operations in Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, because "European morale would be undermined and the door opened to the spread of Bolshevism."⁸ Under these circumstances, although ARC units in western Europe departed by March 1, the ARC Commissions in Eastern Europe and the Balkans stayed to continue dispensing relief to East European people. There was an acute need for civilian relief assistance in the region because of the continuing political instability, the perpetual refugee problem, and the spread of epidemics.⁹ The ARC station in Belgrade with its doctors, nurses, sanitary experts, and field workers remained the agency's headquarters in the Balkans until 1920.

During the postwar period, the ARC also established its first relief commission in Greece. In the spring of 1919 the Greek government was facing emergencies related to civilian dislocation as a result of the war; civilians who had been detained in neighboring Bulgaria during the war were returning and a steadily increasing number of refugees poured into Greece from the disintegrating Ottoman Empire and the Black Sea

6. American Red Cross, "Visits, Inspections," 12 August 1919, *Records of the American National Red Cross, 1917-34*, NA Gift Collection, R.G. 200, 964.06 Commission to Greece World War I, Box 908, News Service, Greece; American Consul in Salonika to the secretary of state, Washington, 21 August 1917, NA 868.48/17.

7. ARC's overall contribution to the European people during the First World War is exhibited in the funds it spent for relief work. Over \$400,000,000 was ultimately raised through Red Cross war fund and membership drives, and by February 1919—when the agency closed its books on war expenses—nearly three-fourths of this sum had been spent in wartime operations. Of that amount, \$121,000,000 was spent overseas. Dulles, *Red Cross*, 151.

8. *Ibid.*, 197.

9. Dulles, *ibid.*, 195-97, 201-03.

communities, which had come under Bolshevik control. There were few Greek philanthropic organizations to share in the relief work, and those few lacked the means and skilled personnel to undertake the increasing relief task. On the national level, the Greek Red Cross (GRC) and the ministry of public assistance were responsible for civilian relief problems. However, the latter's urgent appeal to ARC at the end of the war reflects the inability of both Greek agencies to carry out the relief efforts on their own.¹⁰

The ARC Commission arrived in Athens in October 1918. Athens became the headquarters of ARC, but Salonika was selected to serve as the major storage depot. A substantial number among the agency's personnel were Greek, including women doctors, nurses, and other staff.¹¹ The decision to maintain a small number of American personnel reflects a fundamental ARC policy to involve more local people in the relief campaign, with the expectation that, upon the organization's withdrawal from the country, these well-trained Greeks could take over the relief work to assure the continuation of civilian rehabilitation.

Immediately after its arrival, the ARC Commission was called upon to help cope with the unfolding emergency of repatriating Greek refugees and war prisoners who had been deported from eastern Macedonia to Bulgaria during the German-Bulgarian occupation of the area in the First World War.¹² According to Greek sources, the deportees numbered 36,000 but only 17,000 survived deprivation and forced labor to return to Greece in the aftermath of the war.¹³

As soon as Colonel Edward Capps, the head of the ARC Commission in Greece, arrived in Athens, he visited eastern Macedonia to assess the extent of the relief work required and ordered ARC personnel to record in detail the needs of all the inhabitants. In fact, this method of assessing relief needs among poverty-stricken populations before actual aid

10. ARC, Commission to Greece, *Relief Work in Eastern Macedonia* (Athens, 1 July 1919), 95–96.

11. ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1920*, 115; *The Red Cross Courier*, 1 May 1926, 17. The personnel that arrived in the fall of 1918 numbered around fifty people. In the beginning of 1919 the number, including physicians and nurses, increased to a total of seventy-five. See *Red Cross Bulletin*, 44 (1 February 1919), 1.

12. In the summer and early fall of 1916, joint German-Bulgarian armies had occupied eastern Macedonia. The Greeks regained the area in September of 1918 as a result of the victorious Allied campaign against the Central Powers on the Macedonian front.

13. George Leontarites, "Ekonomia kai Koinwnia apo to 1914 ws to 1918" [Economy and Society from 1914 to 1918] *Historia tou Hellenikou Ethnous* [History of the Greek Nation] (Athens: Ekdotike Athenwn, 1978) 16: 82. Charles Eddy assesses the number of captured Greek civilians to be as high as 52,000. See Charles B. Eddy, *Greece and the Greek Refugees* (London: George Allen, 1931), 46.

was dispatched became ARC's standard procedure in the following years. Furthermore, the Commission conducted preliminary studies of the conditions in every area of Greece where it operated. Special attention was given to sanitary conditions, medical services, and economic resources in each region. These detailed reports proved very helpful to ARC personnel in 1922 when they determined the economic potential of areas where Ottoman Greek refugees settled.

Among the first conclusions of ARC preliminary studies was that Greek medical facilities were underdeveloped. Several well-equipped hospitals operated in Athens, but only five to six hospitals served the majority of the population living outside Athens. Due to the protracted war mobilization and domestic political instability in Greece, even the existing hospitals were deficient in supplies and equipment. Besides, most of the civilian hospitals had been transformed into emergency hospitals to accommodate the demands of the military. To assist in the reorganization of the hospitals, ARC agreed to supply equipment for military and civilian hospitals in Athens and Salonika; the Greek government was to pay for the supplies. In addition, ARC provided medical assistance and supplies for civilian relief in the parts of Greece where it operated.¹⁴

ARC relief efforts concentrated mostly on eastern Macedonia, where the majority of the returning war prisoners and refugees settled. ARC cooperated with GRC in evacuating the detained civilians from Bulgaria. At ARC stations in eastern Macedonia, relief workers distributed food, clothes, and medication to the civilians. The hardships of captivity and, in some cases, forced labor had caused serious health problems. ARC established small medical units in the towns and other entry points in eastern Macedonia to provide these civilians with emergency medical assistance.¹⁵ This relief operation was carried out from late November 1918 until January 1919 when the majority of the detained civilians had returned to Greece.

From January to May 1919 a typhus epidemic, transmitted by Greek refugees from Black Sea communities that had passed under Bolshevik control, posed a serious threat to all of eastern Macedonia. The refugees began arriving in eastern Macedonia in increasing numbers in the

14. ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1919*, 132; ARC, Commission to Greece, *Survey of the Hospitals of Greece* (1 July 1919), 14–15.

15. ARC, *Relief in Eastern Macedonia*, 37; ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1919*, 129–32.

spring of 1919, but local authorities were not prepared to accommodate such numbers. A lack of sanitary shelters and lax quarantine regulations and medical inspections accounted for a soaring increase in the number of typhus cases.¹⁶ Unable to contain the epidemic, local authorities sought the assistance of ARC. As soon as the latter stepped in, a coordination of efforts between the two parties helped control the epidemic. ARC doctors and nurses, in cooperation with the Greek authorities, established and operated medical inspection teams, set up delousing plants and quarantine stations, provided medical supplies, and distributed information about proper sanitation.¹⁷

The results of this joint effort against typhus were sufficiently positive to allow ARC to withdraw from relief work in eastern Macedonia in May 1919. At the same time, from 10 November 1918 to 16 May 1919, ARC carried its relief campaign to another group of displaced Greeks in several Aegean islands. Ottoman Greek refugees from the mainland of Asia Minor gathered in the Aegean islands, particularly in Mytilini, Chios, and Samos, as the repressive policies of the Turkish government against Greek communities in the Ottoman Empire intensified during and after the First World War. ARC reports estimate the total number of Greek refugees in the Aegean islands at this time to have been as high as 92,850.¹⁸ During that operation serious epidemics posed no threat, so the ARC campaign concentrated on distributing food and basic medical supplies.

As soon as the relief campaign in eastern Macedonia and the Aegean islands ended, the number of ARC personnel was reduced substantially until the agency closed its operation in Greece on 1 June 1920.¹⁹ Though officially withdrawn from Greece, the ARC, called upon by the GRC once again in March 1921 and concerned about the Greek refugees

16. Between January and May 1919, typhus cases reached 1,318 and the death toll 168, thus raising the average mortality rate for the epidemic to 12.74 percent. ARC, Commission to Greece, *The Typhus Epidemic in Eastern Macedonia* (Athens, June 1919), 4, 7, 33.

17. Ibid., 13, 26; Greek Red Cross (hence GRC), *Drasis Hellenikou Erythrou Stavrou* [Activities of the Greek Red Cross] (Athens, 1927), 32. Approximately twenty-one ARC personnel were engaged in this campaign. Five contracted typhus, and one of them, Lieutenant Edward Walker, died. See ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1919*, 133; GRC, *Drasis*, 32.

18. ARC, Commission to Greece, *Relief Work among the Aegean Islands* (Athens, July 1, 1919), 3–7; “Red Cross Commission to Greece—The ARC in Greece,” July 1919–21, *Records, 1917–34*, NA Gift Collection, RG. 200, 864.08 Commission to Greece, Box 908.

19. It has been estimated that ARC relief in Greece from October 1918 to May 1919 reached 200,000 refugees and its cost approximated \$2,500,000. Xenophwn Pantazides, *He Historia tou Hellenikou Erythrou Stavrou* [The History of the Greek Red Cross] (Athens, 1987), 102; GRC, *Drasis*, 31.

from the Caucasus region, dispatched personnel from Paris to assist these refugees, who had headed to Greece in late 1919, fleeing the nationalist Turkish armies of Mustafa Kemal in the west and the equally hostile Bolsheviks in the east and north. Under Eleftherios Venizelos, the Greek government had promised to settle them in the newly acquired territories of Macedonia and Thrace. However, upon arrival in Greece, they were confronted with a new and ill-disposed political leadership; by then Venizelos had lost power, and the new proroyalist government, according to ARC reports, was not keen to continue the expensive settlement project. The proroyalist government even discontinued relief work among refugees.²⁰

When ARC stepped in, contagious diseases, particularly exanthematic typhus, were claiming an alarmingly high number of refugees' lives.²¹ The major ARC operation took place in the refugee camp of Kalamaria, southeast of Salonika, where for several months the American agency supervised the feeding and medical care of about 4,000 children.²²

Although the most visible of the ARC Commission's efforts in Greece were directed toward the emergency relief of needy populations, its overall activities went far beyond short-term aid. It provided advice, expertise, and technical assistance for the development of public health services, particularly infant welfare institutions in Greece. The emphasis on infant care accorded with ARC's declared policy of concentrating its civilian relief work in Europe on child welfare. It established its first European infant health center in Greece in March 1919 primarily because of the high infant and child mortality rates in that country.²³ At first the stations were run by ARC nurses and a few Greek medical personnel, but soon ARC nurses withdrew as more Greeks were trained

20. About 50,000 refugees settled in Salonika and Central Macedonia by June 1921. ARC, "Relief other than Health," filed February 1922, NA R.G. 200, 964.6 Greece, Box 910; Ernest P. Bicknell, *With the Red Cross in Europe, 1917-1922* (Washington, D.C.: American National Red Cross, 1938), 481.

21. When ARC intervened, the death rate among the refugees had risen to fifty per day. U.S. chargé d'affaires ad interim to the secretary of state, 12 April 1921, NA 868.48/75; Pantazides. *ibid.*, 164.

22. ARC Reports, 1920-21, *Reports, 1917-34*, NA Gift Collection, R.G. 200, 964.62/08 Commission to Greece, World War I, Box 911; Bicknell, *With the Red Cross*, 481; Pantazides, *ibid.*, 165.

23. Infant mortality in Greece was reported to be as high as 25 percent among children under two years of age. See ARC, Commission to Greece, *Final Report of the Department of Civilian Relief: Exclusive of the Districts of the Aegean Islands and Eastern Macedonia* (Athens, July 1919), 14-15.

to provide medical care for the infants. The program was so successful that by 1922 several stations had opened around the country.²⁴

When the ARC Commission in Greece officially closed its relief operations on 1 June 1920, the Greek ministry of public assistance assumed full responsibility for the public infant welfare program. Greek nurses, trained in the ARC program, were assigned to administer and operate the facilities. Members of the ARC Commission often acknowledged that, although Greece was lacking in health and social welfare services, competent specialists were available in every field to offer expertise in reorganizing the Greek public health and social welfare institutions.

Emergency Relief to the Ottoman Greek Refugees, 1922–1923

In June 1920 the ARC postwar mission to Greece was viewed as successfully completed. In the fall of 1922, however, Greece faced an unprecedented emergency and asked ARC to undertake a massive relief operation among approximately one million Greek refugees fleeing the dismembered Ottoman Empire.²⁵ Although the war had ended on the European fronts in 1918, an increasingly complex diplomatic and military crisis was brewing in the Near East and climaxed in the Greco-Turkish war of 1920–22. What had begun in Anatolia in 1920 as a successful Greek expansionist campaign to reclaim medieval Byzantine lands turned into a hasty Greek retreat and humiliating defeat in the summer of 1922. The victorious counteroffensive of Mustafa Kemal's Turkish nationalist forces in the summer of 1922 put an end to the elusive Greek irredentist vision of the Great Idea and a 2,500-year Greek presence in Asia Minor. In the fall of 1922, hundreds of thou-

24. Approximately ten such stations had opened in the city of Athens which took care at one time of about six hundred infants, six stations in Salonika and several more in Patras, Canea in Crete, and Adrianople in Thrace. See ARC, Commission to Greece, *Final Report*, 18; ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1922*, 73; Portia B. Kernodle, *The Red Cross Nurse in Action, 1882–1948* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), 202–03.

25. The refugee exodus occurred in an hour of chaos and bitterness in Greek politics. As a result of the military defeat, King Constantine abdicated the throne, was replaced by his eldest son, and a new civilian government was installed. However, actual power lay with the army, which continued to play a decisive role in Greek politics throughout the interwar period. A revolutionary committee, controlled by the army, seized power and formed a new cabinet as the massive refugee influx began to unfold. In the following years, Greek domestic politics remained volatile and bitterly divisive over the constitutional question, thus profoundly undermining the refugees' chances for smooth assimilation in their new country.

sands of Ottoman Greeks as well as some 35,000 Ottoman Armenians fled in panic from their communities in Turkey and sought to escape to Greece.²⁶

Under those precarious circumstances, in response to the Greek government's urgent appeal, ARC and other American humanitarian agencies, the Near East Relief (NER), and the American Women's Hospitals operated in Greece as U.S. government-sponsored organizations, providing the most extensive foreign relief assistance to the destitute refugees. Despite the short duration of their work, the U.S. agencies, ARC in particular, left a lasting impression upon the refugees as well as the Greek people.

On 8 October 1922, in response to the Greek government's appeal, President Warren G. Harding pledged immediate U.S. relief assistance to the Near Eastern Christian refugees. ARC and NER were called upon to undertake the relief campaign jointly under the general direction of ARC. NER was charged with providing relief for the refugees while they were still on Turkish territory, whereas ARC was assigned to take over when the refugees arrived in Greece.²⁷

The ARC Central Committee refused initially to commit itself to the task, arguing that it would not pledge any aid before it was provided with an estimate of the proportions of the disaster. In contrast, while strongly criticizing ARC for evading the call to act, NER responded to the emergency immediately by pledging contributions and relief supplies.²⁸ In the end, the magnitude of the disaster and possible political pressure for U.S. action compelled the ARC administration to align with NER to carry out the presidential decision.

At a meeting on Monday, 9 October 1922, the ARC Central Committee authorized Chairman John Barton Payne to appropriate ARC funds for the Smyrna disaster. The chairman noted that public contributions were to be solicited specifically for the Near East Emergency Fund, so as to distinguish them from general donations intended for other ARC activities. He added that the fund-raising campaign on behalf of the Near Eastern Christians would be advertised only in the

26. By late 1923 over a million destitute refugees descended upon that country, whose population was slightly over five million.

27. Charles E. Hughes, secretary of state, Washington, to Mark L. Bristol, U.S. high commissioner to Turkey, Constantinople, 12 October 1922, NA 868.48/173.

28. *Foreign Relations of the U.S. (1922)* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1923), 416.

agency's magazine, the *Red Cross Courier*.²⁹ The campaign had an instant appeal across the country. Donations by the public to the Near East Emergency Fund poured in.³⁰

The fund drive's initial success enabled ARC to increase its appropriations for relief in Greece. During the first month of the emergency, a total of approximately \$225,000 was cabled to the American Relief Committee³¹ in Athens for foodstuffs, clothing, and blankets. The American Relief Committee acted as the ARC representative in Greece until ARC arrived there in late October.³² Nonetheless, following the dispatch of the first monetary appropriations, ARC requested its American personnel in Greece to survey the entire refugee situation. Further relief operations were to be based upon the result of this survey.

The national convention of ARC, which met in Washington soon after the Central Committee authorized relief operations in Greece, unanimously endorsed the committee's direction of Red Cross funds to meet the emergency. Dr. A. Ross Hill, vice chairman in charge of foreign operations, sailed for Greece on 13 October to organize the work in the field. In early January 1923, Lieutenant Colonel William N. Haskell was appointed ARC commissioner to Greece and with Major Edmund L. Daley, deputy commissioner, carried on Hill's work. ARC nurses serving in cities throughout Europe were ordered by cable to proceed to Greece for emergency duty. Charlotte Heilman, among the first to arrive there, was placed in charge of the ARC nurses.³³

As soon as the ARC mission arrived in Greece, the Greek government asked that ARC take entire charge of the ministry of public assistance. Hill declined, pointing out that the purpose of the American relief organizations was not to assume responsibility for the refugees but to assist the Greek government in caring for them. When Haskell arrived in Greece in January 1923, he reiterated Hill's argument, em-

29. *The Red Cross Courier*, 14 October 1922, 1, 7; *ibid.*, 28 October 1922, 1.

30. *Ibid.*, 14 October 1922, 1, 7; *ibid.*, 4 November 1922, 2.

31. The committee was comprised of Americans residing in Greece, that is, administrators of the American Archaeological School of Classical Studies in Athens, businessmen, and the YMCA directors. After October 1923, the personnel of the American relief agencies joined as well.

32. ARC, "Chronological Summary of Red Cross Relief Work for Greek Refugees—September 6th, 1922 to February 7th, 1923," *Records, 1917–34*, NA Gift Collection, R.G. 200, 964.6 Greece Relief other than Health, Box 910; *The Red Cross Courier*, 28 October 1922, 1; Archeion tou Ypourgeiou Exwterikwn [Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Athens, Greece] (AYE), 1923/A/2(6), 13/30 September 1922, Lieu d'expédition, Washington, to ministry for foreign affairs, Ser. Doc. 1439.

33. Most of ARC administrative officers had a remarkable record of experience in relief work in Europe, Russia, and the Near East during and after the First World War.

phasizing that the primary obligation of caring for the refugees rested on the Greek government.³⁴

During those early days, ARC officials faced a political challenge. Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, high commissioner for refugees with the League of Nations, arrived in Athens in late October and sought the Greek government's approval for the formation of a general supervisory committee for all refugee relief work in Greece under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations. Jefferson Caffery, the U.S. chargé d'affaires ad interim to Greece, informed the Greek government that American relief organizations were willing to collaborate with the League of Nations committee on an equal basis, but that it was impossible to work under the supervision of the League.³⁵ Therefore, during the next nine months American relief work, including ARC's, proceeded independently from other international relief efforts and remained the most extensive foreign assistance.

While organizing its relief campaign in Greece, the ARC mission relied on its prior work in that country, which allowed the agency to respond quickly to the emergency and reach hundreds of thousands of refugees. There were few American personnel throughout the emergency period because ARC drew on Greek personnel to administer and run the relief work, as did NER; ARC personnel in Salonika, a concentration point for hundreds of thousands of refugees, consisted of 7 Americans and 150 Greeks.³⁶

ARC relief work was organized in twelve administrative units, closely corresponding to the major administrative divisions in Greece, its provinces. Subordinate ARC units were established in each division, with a distribution station in each administrative unit to facilitate the delivery of relief supplies. The first task of an administrative unit was to survey each town in the district to which it was assigned and report to the headquarters in Athens. The survey was supposed to include information about the town's population, the number of refugees, availability of local medical personnel, funds for refugee relief, housing, water supply, sanitary conditions, and medical facilities.³⁷ Relief units were

34. *Foreign Relations of the United States* (1922), 443; *The Red Cross Courier*, 6 January 1923, 1.

35. *Foreign Relations of the U.S.* (1922), 443. All U.S. humanitarian organizations operating in Europe in the aftermath of the war took the same stand. It was a firm U.S. policy not to subject U.S. assistance in Europe to any foreign authority.

36. *National Herald*, 27 July 1923, 3; 27 July 1923, 3; *The Red Cross Courier*, 26 May 1923, 6.

37. ARC, "Division by Districts of ARC Work in Greece, 1922-1923," *Records, 1917-34*, NA R.G. 200, 964.523 Nursing, Box 910; *The Red Cross Courier*, 24 February 1923, 2.

dispatched as soon as the surveys were completed. ARC reports from 1918 to 1920 were taken into consideration when the new surveys were drafted and helped determine the availability of local resources in each area.

The largest ARC relief unit was established in Salonika, where a comparatively large number of refugees was directed. Salonika could provide temporary shelter for many refugees in buildings that had been requisitioned during the war and remained empty after the departure of the Allied armies. Besides, a large ARC relief unit in Salonika could serve the needs of thousands of refugees sent to towns and rural areas in Macedonia.

ARC units were also dispatched to the major Aegean islands, where the situation had become rather critical because large numbers of refugees remained there long after the massive evacuation ended. ARC responded to this situation by providing the refugees with continuous shipments of food, medical supplies, clothing and blankets.³⁸

According to both Greek and American primary sources, a spirit of amicability and collaboration characterized relations between the Greek government and ARC. But is this characterization accurate given the chaotic reality of the refugee exodus? Primary sources offer no substantial evidence of disagreements or tension between the two parties. Greek sources in general convey the gratitude of the Greek government and people for the high-minded American campaign; they may tend to ignore incidents of tension, inefficiency, or misappropriation in the handling of the campaign. Conversely, ARC personnel reports are most often "bureaucratic," that is, quantitative assessments of the agency's work, omitting the reporter's judgment or observations. Frequently featured in the ARC reports, moreover, are accounts of self-praise, necessary given the underlying competition with other relief agencies and even with the Greek government. Perhaps, however, the absence of evidence about tension between the two parties reflects, rather than omissions by the sources, a relatively harmonious cooperation in spite of the immense challenge of the relief task.

Mindful of the importance of the ARC work, the Greek government, in particular, cultivated a collaborative spirit. It acknowledged its own

38. For example, in January 1923 the population of the island of Chios numbered 30,000 and 35,000 refugees were there. At the same time in Mytilini, 45,000 refugees were added to the normal population of 150,000. See *The Red Cross Courier*, 13 January 1923, 2.

inexperience and lack of funds for such a massive relief effort and commended the expertise and professionalism of ARC in dealing with the disaster and looked to American assistance to address the crisis. It provided ARC personnel with housing, transportation, communication links, buildings for sheltering refugees, and warehouses for supply storage.³⁹ The revolutionary Greek government also issued a special order to all local civil and military authorities to provide all possible assistance to the ARC units. By mid-December 1922, when the majority of the refugees had already been evacuated to Greece, it was in a position to provide more assistance to ARC. It assigned local civil authorities to form refugee relief committees to handle the distribution of ARC supplies. The committees were in charge of receiving and distributing the relief supplies to the refugees and were accountable to the ministry of public assistance and to the ARC.⁴⁰

In its effort to establish control and order in the ARC relief distribution, the ministry of public assistance strictly defined whom it would consider and treat as refugees and subsequently provide with refugee identification cards. Those who qualified for ARC assistance were people expatriated from the former Ottoman Empire, who escaped to Greece after 14 August 1922. Neither race nor religion was a discriminating factor for granting relief aid to this group; the criteria were age, health condition, and ability to work. In fact, the refugee relief committees were instructed to examine carefully the recipients' physical condition before deciding whether to grant aid.⁴¹ They were expected, moreover, to urge refugees to seek employment.

Relief supplies were assembled and shipped from the United States in an orderly fashion. The dispatch of provisions from the United States was entirely the responsibility of ARC, which carried out its task with great efficiency. Upon Hill's departure for Greece, Ernest P. Bicknell was appointed acting director in charge at the headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he set up a purchasing organization that proceeded

39. Nevertheless, the Greek government assumed the major burden of caring for the refugees and coordinating the emergency relief dispensed by Greek and foreign humanitarian agencies. Simultaneously, it began planning for the permanent refugee settlement.

40. *National Herald*, 19 March 1923, 1; Constantinos Kargiwtes, *Diataxes Aforwsai ten Pronoian kai Astiken Egatastasen tun Prosfygun* [Stipulations Pertaining to the Relief and Urban Settlement of Refugees] (Athens: Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, 1926), 78–79; Edward Hale Bierstadt, *The Great Betrayal: A Survey of the Near East Problem* (New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1924), 253.

41. Kargiwtes, *Diataxes*, 75–76.

to buy and ship large quantities of food, clothing, and medical supplies. These were shipped to Greece weekly.

Several government offices in Washington, D.C. assisted and expedited the ARC campaign; the departments of commerce and agriculture often facilitated the immediate shipment of requisitioned supplies.⁴² During the weeks of the massive refugee evacuation to Greece, ARC also sought the cooperation of the American Relief Administration (ARA), which managed to divert food supplies from other European countries, where it was conducting relief work, and to dispatch them to Greece. ARA also supplemented food provisions for ARC in New York when serious freight congestion held up ARC supplies. ARA, moreover, did not charge for its overhead expenses, which amounted to about \$60,000.⁴³

In Greece the supplies were placed in warehouses provided by the Greek government. From there they were rapidly distributed at Greek government expense to the refugee camps. ARC units did not engage in the actual delivery of food supplies to the refugees, as that responsibility lay with the local refugee relief committees, which were responsible for keeping records of the total number of recipients assisted during each distribution.

Each day the refugees received 300 grams of bread and a hot dish, usually a thick soup at lunch time. Infants, children, and nursing mothers also received a milk supplement.⁴⁴ For those refugees who settled in remote areas, where relief provisions were not easily accessible, the Greek government provided monetary aid of two drachmas per day. Finally, for those who received some food but less than the regular ration, the Greek government supplemented the missing food with one drachma per day.⁴⁵

Similar policies were applied to the clothing campaign. When requisitions were made for clothes, all ARC chapters across the United States were notified. On the local level, members as well as nonmembers accomplished the task through voluntary work. Local branches pledged a

42. *The Red Cross Courier*, 21 October 1922, 1.

43. *The Red Cross Courier*, 4 November 1922, 1; *ibid.*, 11 November 1922, 2; Hoover, *An American Epic: Famine in Forty-Five Nations, The Battle on the Front Line* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961), 3:395.

44. *The Red Cross Courier*, 2 December 1922, 1. A League of Nations observer argued that ARC food rations were rather insufficient for adult refugees as well as children. See League of Nations, Health Committee, 6th Sess., 27 May 1923, C.424.M.187.1923.III.

45. Kargiwtes, *Diataxes*, 76.

specific amount of supplies, but usually the actual contribution surpassed the initial pledge. At the production department in New York, the assembled donations were sorted, cleaned, and packed. The Junior Red Cross proved very helpful in assembling and packing relief supplies.⁴⁶ Moreover, Junior Red Cross Chapters took the relief campaign for the refugee children of Greece to American schools, where they met with an enthusiastic response.

When the clothing shipments arrived in Greece, they were immediately dispatched to the distribution centers and handed to the refugees. The refugee relief committees were ordered to keep lists of the refugees assisted. Only in times of extreme emergency were lists of clothing recipients compiled in aggregate numbers. The purpose of maintaining name lists during the distribution of clothes was to monitor improvement in the refugees' economic situation. Since clothes were distributed to every refugee less often than food, the committees expected that between deliveries the recipients' health and economic status would improve enough to allow them to seek employment and self-sufficiency.⁴⁷

Provision of medical care constituted the third and equally crucial aspect of ARC's relief work. In that task both ARC and NER received significant help from the American Women's Hospitals' (AWH) doctors. The contribution of AWH as the medical auxiliary of both ARC and NER is rather understated in the records of the two latter agencies, perhaps, in part, because the number of AWH doctors involved in the relief campaign was far smaller than the number of personnel from the two other agencies. Besides, this small women's organization lacked the political and financial support that the other two agencies enjoyed among influential political and financial circles in the United States. Nor did it draw as much media coverage. Nevertheless, despite their limited resources, the AWH doctors performed their task with admirable professionalism and humanitarian concern for the refugees.

While ARC financed the majority of the medical stations at the refugee camps and provided food and clothing for the patients, AWH doctors supervised the medical work in most of the camps and relied on Greek and refugee medical staff to carry out the medical campaign. AWH also donated medical supplies. The joint work of ARC and AWH

46. *The Red Cross Courier*, 18 October 1922, 2; *ibid.*, 28 October, 1922, 2.

47. Kargiwtes, *Diataxes*, 76–77.

was done primarily in the larger refugee camps, that is, in the eastern Aegean islands and the major mainland ports and cities.⁴⁸

As soon as the emergency evacuation was completed, ARC, in cooperation with the Greek government, set out a plan of medical relief for the refugees. Refugee camps were divided into 8 medical regions, then subdivided into 100 sanitary districts. This systematic plan permitted the Greek government and ARC to reach out to the majority of the refugees, including those dispersed in remote areas. The Greek government appointed the medical administrators overseeing the campaign and ARC paid their salaries. The plan also provided for the establishment of sanitary policies in the refugee camps, such as the cleaning and ventilation of buildings, construction of sewers and latrines, and periodic disinfection of the camps.⁴⁹

The medical services were organized so that ARC and AWH could cope with three groups of sick refugees: those who needed treatment but not hospital care; those who needed hospital care; and those who had contracted contagious diseases and therefore required isolation. For the patients who needed only dispensary treatment, ARC established 100 outpatient stations or ambulatories. For persons needing hospital care, wards of up to ten beds each were established in the refugee camps. Since camp wards were often overcrowded, ARC offered to supplement existing hospital facilities by adding more beds or new hospital units.⁵⁰

In addition, the agency organized mobile units with fifty beds each, so that wherever infectious diseases began to assume epidemic character, the mobile units could be rushed to the spot in order to confine the spread of the disease and provide hospital care to the infected refugees. Also, ARC furnished bathing and delousing plants for the disinfection of refugees who contracted contagious diseases. The capacity of the delousing plants reached 3,000 persons a day.⁵¹

48. For a detailed list of medical stations, clinics, and hospitals operated by the AWH, see U.S. Legation to Athens to the secretary of state, 30 January 1923, NA 868.143/1; enclosure with dispatch no. 1688.

49. *The Red Cross Courier*, 27 January 1923, 2; *Kathemerine* [The Daily Paper], 9/22 December 1922, 3. The majority of specialists employed in the ARC medical campaign were Greek doctors, including refugees. See League of Nations, Health Committee, Geneva, 5th Sess., 25 January 1923, C.27.M.13.1923.III.

50. *The Red Cross Courier*, 27 January 1923, 2; *Kathemerine*, 9/22 December 1922, 3.

51. During the nine-month emergency period, ARC established 59 hospitals with 1,751 beds. It treated 9,781 patients in the hospitals, 233,543 ambulatory cases, 6,091 typhus cases, 2,471 smallpox cases, 218 typhoid cases, 74,777 malaria cases, and 4,849 other cases of contagious

Nevertheless, the refugee camps were not clean. The major problem was the lack of sanitary infrastructure, including sewerage systems and latrines in the camps. The camps had been designed as temporary shelters for the refugees, but most of them, especially the camps around the major Greek cities, developed into permanent residences for many refugees. As a result, the camps' inadequate, poor infrastructure impaired the refugees' chances for improved living standards for a long time.

Moreover, the overall health conditions in Greece during the postwar years reflected low incomes, poor food supplies, and inadequate housing. Diseases such as tuberculosis, typhoid fever, malaria, and the intestinal diseases of infancy and childhood were prevalent, resulting in high death rates in Greek cities.⁵² The arrival of the refugees exacerbated endemic diseases and introduced others, including smallpox and serious eye diseases, such as trachoma and ophthalmia. Although not deadly, the latter could lead to blindness, thus necessitating continuous treatment. ARC and AWH tried to contend with ophthalmia by providing eye clinics at the medical facilities in the refugee camps.⁵³

The rapid spread of contagious diseases among the refugees prompted ARC and AWH to launch a joint medical campaign. They were quite successful in checking the spread of smallpox and typhus by the middle of 1923.⁵⁴ In the fight against rampant epidemics, vaccination was the first step taken in the disinfecting of arriving refugees. In order to enforce vaccination, AWH doctors requested ARC relief workers to refrain from issuing food to anyone who was not first vaccinated, and from distributing clothes until the refugees had first passed

diseases. It established 66 delousing plants where 399,483 refugees were treated and 57 bathing plants where 419,633 refugees were bathed. Also, 114,934 refugees were vaccinated by ARC. There were 91,061 typhoid and paratyphoid inoculations and 84,916 cholera ones. See ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1923*, 64–65; *The Red Cross Courier*, 14 April 1923, 9; *National Herald*, 25 January 1923, 3.

52. Homer Folks, lieutenant colonel of ARC, "Preliminary Memorandum on Greece," 22 January 1919, *Records*, 1917–34, NA R.G. 200, 964.08 ARC Missions to Greece, Box 908.

53. Esther Pohl Lovejoy, *Women Physicians and Surgeons: National and International Organizations* (New York: Livingston Press, 1939), 146–47, 155–57.

54. See n. 51. Also "Stenographic report of the speech of Lt. Col. William N. Haskell," in "Confidential Statement regarding the refugee situation in Greece and the negotiations with the ARC prepared by Apostolos Doxiades," 8 January 1924, *Papers of Apostolos Doxiades*, Benaki Museum, Athens, 256/Folder 3/Ser. Doc. 7, 3.

through the delousing baths.⁵⁵ Prompt vaccination helped reduce the spread of smallpox and typhus dramatically.

Quarantine stations set up at the major arrival points and smaller disinfection plants in the refugee camps also helped retard the spread of contagious diseases. The largest quarantine stations were established in Salonika, Piraeus, and on the barren island of Makronisos off the coast of Attica; the latter operated for six months in early 1923 under the exclusive supervision of AWH. At these stations, infected refugees were vaccinated, treated, and cared for until their complete recovery.⁵⁶

Attempts to combat other epidemics, such as malaria, were not as successful as the fight against malaria required more than the effective, yet short-term, methods of the U.S. agencies. The many swamps of Greece bred mosquitos, and malaria was already endemic among the population. Upon the arrival of the refugees, severer forms of the disease appeared, menacing both refugees and natives until the late 1930s. Only then did the Greek government address the problem by completing major public works projects, which allowed for the draining of extensive swampy areas and land reclamation for refugee settlement.

Overall, AWH doctors, in cooperation with ARC nurses and Greek medical personnel, managed to supervise medical relief in the major refugee camps and to reach refugees dispersed in smaller groups throughout mainland Greece as well as in the islands. By means of motor cars and outlying village clinics, AWH doctors operated small medical units among groups of refugees who found temporary shelter in remote towns and villages.

ARC also set up a sanitary education campaign to halt and prevent diseases. Health posters and pamphlets with simple, comprehensible messages were displayed in the refugee camps, underscoring the link between unsanitary practices and the spread of contagious diseases and admonishing refugees to keep themselves and their lodgings clean. This campaign made such an impression upon officials at the bureau of hy-

55. M. E. Elliot, M.D. Director of AWH, to Jefferson Caffery, chargé d'affaires, American Legation in Athens, 29 January 1923, enclosed in Caffery to secretary of state, 30 January 1923, NA 868.143/1; League of Nations, Health Committee, 6th Sess., 27 May 1923, C.424.M.187.1923.III.

56. AYE, 1923/League of Nations/84, 5 September 1923, Ministry of Health to Ministry for Foreign Affairs (League of Nations Office), Ser. Doc. 534; Lovejoy, *ibid.*, 12; Bierstadt, *Betrayal*, 246.

giene in the Greek ministry of education that they asked for ARC permission to use the pamphlets in the Greek public schools.⁵⁷

The area of ARC relief work that best demonstrates the success of the groundwork laid during the early stage of its operations in Greece and employed again during the emergency period was the infant welfare program. By the fall of 1922 this project was well established and running smoothly under Greek administration. When ARC arrived in the fall of 1922, steps were immediately taken to connect the established welfare stations and the refugee emergency work. Infants were redefined as children under three in order to take care of all the smaller children. It is noteworthy that in 1922 not one American was added to the staff, and in order to reduce the responsibilities of the ministry of health and social welfare⁵⁸ the infant welfare program was put under the supervision of the Patriotic League, a private Greek philanthropic association.

ARC, with the assistance of AWH, established infant welfare stations in the major refugee concentration areas to help feed and provide medical services for refugee infants. Infants and nursing mothers received regular distributions of milk, food, and clothes. Infant ailments were the major concern of the two agencies. The most prevalent of them, diseases of the digestive and respiratory systems,⁵⁹ reflected the exposure and privation which the infants endured during the exodus days and continued to experience in the refugee camps. The staff at the stations also helped refugee families settle in homes and found work for refugee mothers. In fact, the entire families of refugee infants became the concern of the infant welfare workers, since a significant number of them were fatherless and nursing mothers had difficulties holding a job.⁶⁰

The medical care of pregnant and nursing mothers became a significant component of the medical campaign associated with the infant welfare program. However, the service was not adequate to reach pregnant refugee women in all the refugee camps. Nor did AWH or ARC

57. *The Red Cross Courier*, 23 June 1923, 2.

58. The former ministry of public assistance was renamed the ministry of health and social welfare, and its jurisdiction was extended to encompass all matters regarding refugee relief and resettlement.

59. Charlotte Heilman, Director of Nursing, "Report on Infant Welfare Work in Athens, Greece, as of June 30, 1923," *Records, 1917-34*, NA R.G. 200, 964.523 Greek Commission, Nursing, Box 910.

60. *Ibid.*, 964.523 Greek Commission, Nursing, Box 910.

have the financial means to provide prenatal care for all refugee expectant mothers. The two agencies, therefore, attempted to reach them through an educational campaign. Printed leaflets with "Advice to Mothers" were posted conspicuously in the refugee camps and distributed to mothers. In addition, health education and disease prevention classes were held to teach refugee mothers prenatal and postnatal care and fundamental rules of good health.⁶¹

When ARC concluded its emergency work in Greece, the infant welfare program continued under the supervision of competent local personnel. Hospitals and medical stations operating in temporary quarters were closed. Those facilities located on properties belonging to communities were left to the local authorities with extra equipment, supplies, and a small subsidy to assist in the care of the refugees for a few months.

By 1923, ARC was experiencing increasing difficulties in its fund-raising activities in the United States as was NER. The fund drive for the Near East Emergency Fund did not meet the expectations of the organizers. Thus, neither agency was able to cover the expenses of the relief campaign in Greece through contributions. According to Robert Daniel, the situation became more critical for ARC because, after the refugee evacuation, the strain on NER lessened considerably and increased steadily for ARC.⁶² In addition, the ARC decision to solicit separate funds for the Near Eastern Christians apart from the general contributions hampered the success of the fund drive. After the completion of the massive refugee evacuation in October 1922, contributions to the Emergency Fund declined significantly, and the agency drew heavily from its disaster reserve fund in order to finance the campaign in Greece. In the end, financial constraints prompted the organization's decision to withdraw from the country in June 1923.⁶³

In April 1923, Haskell, the ARC commissioner to Greece, informed the Greek government of the organization's decision to terminate the relief operations in the country on 30 June 1923. Such early warning was intended to allow the Greek government sufficient time to take over the relief work. A concurrent notice was sent to the major European

61. Lovejoy, *Women*, 171, 336; *Makedonia* [Macedonia], 4/17 February 1923, 1.

62. Robert L. Daniel, *American Philanthropy in the Near East, 1820-1960* (Athens, Ohio: University of Ohio Press, 1970), 167.

63. *The Red Cross Courier*, July 7, 1923; Daniel, *Philanthropy*, 167; Louis Cassimatis, *American Influence in Greece, 1917-1929* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1988), 132.

powers, calling on them to work out an international plan of assistance for the refugees in Greece.

While expressing its gratitude for ARC relief work, the Greek government pleaded with the ARC administration to reconsider its decision. The Greek government argued that the emergency period was not over yet because large numbers of refugees were still in need of basic material means, while the government itself was unable to carry on the relief work. It insisted that around 100,000 refugees were in need of everything, while there were still at least 400,000 more who were relying on ARC aid. Without ARC support those refugees would be in need of everything as well. Besides, thousands of refugees were still arriving in Greece, and they too needed aid.⁶⁴

ARC representatives supported their decision with three major arguments. First, ARC had fulfilled its mandate as an emergency relief organization whose purpose is to address the early shocks of a disaster and ease the task of local agencies as they try to assume the long-term handling of the crisis. ARC responded to that urgent call from October 1922 into the early summer of 1923 and promised that by the time of its withdrawal, it would leave behind enough food to feed a considerable number of refugees for a few months.

Second, ARC leadership contended that during its emergency work in Greece, it had relied extensively on Greek personnel at all levels of the relief work. As at no time during the emergency period did the American personnel exceed fifty people, a widespread relief organization of Greeks would remain to continue the work after ARC withdrawal.

The third argument, involving the assessment of the number of needy refugees, aroused the most heated debate with the Greek government. Questioning the validity of the Greek government's statistics, ARC countered that only 100,000 refugees would still need emergency assistance at the time of ARC withdrawal. Even if the higher numbers were accurate, in the opinion of the ARC Central Committee they did not indicate "a situation of such an emergency character as to justify a renewed Red Cross appeal to the public for contributions or the reopening of ARC relief work in Greece."⁶⁵

64. AYE, 1924/League of Nations/F4 (60), 4 January 1924, Greek Royal Legation in Washington to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ser. Doc. 7. Some influential groups, namely, NER and the U.S. Federal Council of Churches, rallied to the support of the Greek government and appealed for the continuation of ARC relief work.

65. *Foreign Relations of the U.S.* (1923), 379.

In the end, the efforts of the Greek government as well as its supporters to alter the ARC decision proved futile. ARC withdrew from Greece on 30 June 1923. In contrast, AWH doctors stayed behind and volunteered their expertise to NER, which had by then concentrated its relief work on the significant number of refugee orphans. From the perspective of the ARC administration, its civilian relief mission in the Near East had lasted too long and gone far beyond its initial scope. After all, the ultimate responsibility for the rehabilitation and settlement of the refugees lay with the Greek government.

Despite the debate over the termination of the ARC work, the Greek government, on behalf of the Greek people, expressed its gratitude to ARC. In a farewell ceremony held in the ancient theater of Herod Atticus in Athens, the Greek government decorated the thirty-nine members of the ARC Mission, including ten nurses, with the official Greek insignia. Greek newspapers outdid one another in verbose, sentimental acknowledgements of the ARC contribution to the refugee rehabilitation. In addition, letters and testimonials of refugee gratitude sent from all over Greece were forwarded to ARC headquarters in Washington, D.C.

When ARC withdrew from Greece, it had spent \$2,609,713.69 since the Smyrna disaster. In the nine-month emergency period it distributed 24,000 tons of food, clothing, and medical supplies.⁶⁶ Until the end of November 1922, approximately 200,000 refugees received food from ARC daily; in winter and spring the number was between 400,000 and 500,000.⁶⁷ Accordingly, the total numbers of refugees who received medical assistance from ARC were also high, varying from simple vaccination to lengthy hospitalization and treatment of contagious diseases.⁶⁸

Even after its withdrawal from Greece, ARC continued, to a far lesser extent, to contribute to the rehabilitation of the Greek refugees. Surplus relief supplies were left behind to accommodate refugees for four to six weeks. The production of clothes continued in ARC chapters, but the Greek government took over their distribution to the refugees. In 1924

66. For an analytical listing of ARC expenses see ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1923*, 62–65; *The Red Cross Courier*, 7 July 1923, 1; *National Herald*, 3 April 1923.

67. ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1923*, 64; *Foreign Relations of the U.S.* (1923), 330; "Stenographic Report of the Speech of Lt. Colonel W. N. Haskell," 8 January 1924, *Papers of Doxiades*, 256/Folder 3/Ser. Doc. 7, 4; Eddy, *Greece*, 53.

68. ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1923*, 64–65.

ARC appropriated an additional \$100,000 for refugee assistance, which brought the total ARC expenditures for Greek relief since September 1922 to approximately \$3,000,000.⁶⁹ ARC's most noteworthy contribution after its withdrawal was the dispatch of large quinine supplies during the next two years,⁷⁰ a gesture symbolic of the significance of the ARC medical campaign as the most essential part of the agency's relief work in Greece.

Several months after ARC's withdrawal, the refugee settlement question entered its last phase. The Refugee Settlement Commission (RSC) was formed under the auspices of the League of Nations to administer the permanent refugee settlement in Greece. From early 1924 until 1930 RSC, together with the Greek government, supervised the rural and urban settlement of the majority of the refugees in Greece. However, the relocation drama for a significant number of Ottoman Greeks continued long after ARC and the other U.S. agencies withdrew from Greece. The demographic, economic, and social challenge that they posed to the Greek government and society was too large and complex to be fully addressed in the context of the nine-month emergency relief campaign. The refugee camps in the outskirts of large Greek cities became poignant reminders of the slow process of the refugees' economic and social assimilation into their new country.

Conclusion

The humanitarian mission of ARC in Greece in the aftermath of the First World War, particularly the emergency campaign of 1922–23, is a remarkable example of the strengths of volunteerism in the face of disaster. At times of great need, it performed its self-assigned mission with much-needed professionalism and efficiency. It sustained the lives of hundreds of thousands of refugees during the very critical months of winter 1922–23; in particular, the joint ARC and AWH medical cam-

69. *The Red Cross Courier*, 12 April 1924, 1; Eddy, *Greece*, 53. Herbert Hoover estimates that the total ARC expenditures in Greece from 1914 to 31 December 1923 were \$4,805,401, most of which went for the care of the refugees from Smyrna. See Hoover, *American Epic*, 3:394.

70. ARC sent two shipments of quinine, amounting to ten tons of five-grain tablets, as a gift to the Greek government in 1924. During the same period, a gift of one million five-grain tablets was made to AWH for its operations in NER hospitals in Greece. Another donation to the Greek government was pledged in 1925, consisting of fourteen million five-grain tablets. See AYE, 1924/League of Nations/F3 (65), 16 February 1924, U.S. chargé d'affaires in Athens to the Greek ministry for foreign affairs, Ser. Doc. 5934; *The Red Cross Courier*, 3 May 1924, 1; *ibid.*, 16 March 1925, 4; ARC, *Annual Report for the Year Ended June 30, 1924*, 65–66.

paign helped contain and drastically reduce the spread of major contagious diseases. The ARC pioneer infant health program affected a large number of native Greek as well as refugee infants and became the basis for a modern component to the Greek medical and social welfare services.

Moreover, ARC offered crucial assistance to the Greek government. For nine months it functioned alongside the latter to provide extensive emergency relief. It demonstrated to the Greek government effective ways and methods of handling the crisis, establishing refugee camps, and operating them. In doing so, ARC helped the Greek government address a manmade disaster of immense magnitude and gradually transform a disaster-stricken population into a self-sufficient and independent people.

The less visible legacy of the ARC humanitarian intervention in Greece resides in its impact upon the Greek professionals who assisted the agency in its relief work. Some of them went on to pursue graduate studies abroad, primarily in the United States and through fellowships provided by ARC, in the fields of medicine, nursing, and infant welfare services. Upon return, they held administrative positions in their areas of expertise and offered their skills in modernizing those fields. There were not many of them, but their impact would have been considerably greater had the political scene in interwar Greece provided more stability and opportunities for the sorely needed building of the country's public health system.

From a diplomatic perspective, ARC, along with the other American philanthropic organizations, remained the "arm" of the U.S. government in postwar Europe for the disbursement of foreign aid. Humanitarian assistance was viewed as a very appropriate element of the U.S. policy of "independent internationalism," which entails interest in and attention to international issues without political commitment or diplomatic involvement. Thus, under the diplomatic protection of the U.S. government, American philanthropic agencies operated not only as humanitarian organizations but also as diplomatic delegates abroad at a time when the U.S. government abstained from active involvement in European affairs. Financial assistance to governments and relief aid to civilians ensured the peaceful rehabilitation of Europe and the growing U.S. political and economic role there in the period after the First World War.