

BREAD TO BELGIUM

During WWI (1914-1918), a small band of neutral Americans in the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB) worked with the Belgian Comité National (CN) to create the largest food relief the world had ever seen, saving nearly 10 million civilians trapped behind German lines. It's a story few have heard.

Donations/Financing
Worldwide donations;
Allied & US Govt Subsidies



Purchasing/Whses
Buy wheat & other food;
Stockpile donations



Ships from around the world to Rotterdam
30-50 CRB ships in the process each day; Goal is 80,000 tons per month



U-boats/Other Losses
CRB ships torpedoed/
mined/wrecked/lost



GERMAN OCCUPIED BELGIUM

Rotterdam to Canal Barges
300-400 pulled thru extensive B. canal network



Mills/Whses
<100 mills create flour;
240 whses in B. & N. Fr.



Local Bakers
Thousands buy exact amounts to bake exact sized loaves to sell



Communes/Soup Kitchens
2,600 communes; thousands of soup kitchens and canteens;
40,000 volunteers prep & distribute



People & Relief
7 million Belgians;
2.5 million N. Fr.;
Those pay who can;
Those who can't get charity

TOTALS (1914-1919)

Imported to Belgium & Northern France

Wheat & Flour 3.2 million tons
Total Food & Goods 4.9 million tons

Donations/Money (in WWI US dollars)

Worldwide Donations \$52.2 million
Govt Subsidies \$700.5 million

Ships/Cargoes

Total delivered cargoes 2,332
Average Cargoes per month 43

U-boat/Other Losses

Ships torpedoed/mined 34
Ships wrecked/accidents 67
Ships lost 38
Cargoes lost at sea 114,000 tons

Belgium Before WWI

Slightly smaller than Maryland;
Imported 75% of all food needed;
Imported 250,000 tons a month;
Most industrialized country in Europe

Population Density per sq. mile

Belgium 652
United Kingdom 374
Germany 310
France 189
United States 31

Learn More: www.WWIBehindTheLines.com

TWO GROUPS

Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB)

Collects/Buys/Ships/
Supervises distribution
↓
CRB Delegates in Belgium
(@180 men; 1 woman)
↓
Supervise agreements &
distribution processes

Comité National de Secours et d'Alimentation (CN)

Organizes distribution
↓
Provincial Committees
↓
2,600 local communes
↓
40,000 volunteers prep
and distribute food

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Sources: CRB official statistics; *Public Relations of the Commission for Relief in Belgium: Documents*, 2 vols., George I. Gay and H. H. Fisher, Stanford University, Stanford University Press, 1929; various other books.