

Letter from Germany

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Breslau, 28 February 1923

Dear Mr. Proske,

I thank you very much for your gift supporting our Heckert Foundation which the magistrate of Breslau received. If the Germans in the United States who found a new home in which they feel secure and warm, have enough to eat and earn enough money which allows them to dress nicely, they should know what a blessing they are to us with every dollar they give to our orphans. They cannot imagine how sad life looks in their fatherland, how expensive food prices are, like bread, potatoes, legumes, milk, eggs and butter. I belong to the well-to-do bureaucracy and also own assets which were well-respected before the war, but I assure you that I, my wife and 2 children who are still in training have been eating margarine for the last year. German people cannot afford butter. American pork fat which was not appreciated before the war is now considered a delicacy. We can get milk three times a week which you now enjoy instead of coffee which is made from roasted barley or chicory. We don't know real coffee which you can only find at special holidays or birthdays. Eggs are so expensive that the housewife can only rarely use them in her cooking. You eat meat on Sundays, you can get 1 ½ to 2 pounds for 5 people. During the week you might get meat for two days. People who used to be able to buy what they needed also have to watch their pennies.

Can you imagine what it is like in our orphanages today? Funds before the war were enough for every month but they are not now. This is why we have to turn to those people who do not live in need today and ask for their support "Help us to give our orphans clothing and bread. They are people like you and I, same race. Do not let them go hungry and be dressed in rags. Think of your duties as Christians."

If we could travel through your country and speak to the German settlers they would love to give listening ears to our stories of their homeland, the very poor conditions we live in. The invasion of the industrial area of Germany by the French gives us reason to suffer even more. We are at deliverance with the enemy wanting to make slaves of us using his whip as he pleases. Is it not disgraceful that the German bureaucracy in the industrial area which refuses to obey the French are captured and punished with enormous penalties of money and put in prison, they are sent away from their homes with their families. Mr. Proske, put yourself into this situation. Assume Mexican soldiers would cross the border, occupied your town, would demand a place to live from your people, food and money. If your people refused to follow their order, they would mistreat you, send you out of your town and put you in prison.

This is the way it is for our brothers at the river Ruhr, in the city Mainz and so on. Sometimes we don't know anymore if we should doubt the injustices of the world which allow for such brutality, or should one doubt the justice of the Lord.

During the war we were defamed by your country that we wanted this war. I tell you that is a lie because Germany was blossoming, and its prosperity had increased from year to year. We knew that France and Russia had formed an alliance against us and that England supported them. We knew that war would come, but we were afraid of it. We would have held our own against the enemy if America which had formed a wrong image of us had not come to support France and England against us. Now peace has been proposed based on the "14 Points" by your President Wilson (January 1918). And now we long for help from America. It sees how we are

doing and being mishandled. But nobody stands by us. If your president would shout at the French “To here and not further” the French would not dare to pressure us anymore. We would take a breath and say “Thank you, Lord. There still is justice.”

Will you be so kind and pass the cards which I attached to Andreas Kasper and Marie Miertschin.

Best regards to you, yours

Professor Dr. Goehlich

Translated by Margot Hendricks