

6/17/41 to 11/1/41

Mr. Harriman S. Eccles -

Federal Reserve Board
Washington, D.C.

MISS MARY ELLEN ARMSTRONG
LOUMAR APARTMENTS
1329 PACIFIC AVENUE
ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY

September 26
1941

The never heard the equal of the country + wide because beyond
the extent to which people in their own minds would

The unbelievable meanness + government support of food prices

Dear Mr. Eccles, In this morning newspaper we hear that it is necessary to return to wartime food controls in order to feed starving Europe. Never in over 60 years of life have I known a time when this country was thrown into such utter bewilderment + confusion by a constant repetition of flat-contradicting by supposedly responsible + authoritative people.

Within the past week, in any number
 of newspapers and 'on the radio
 we have read & heard that
 there is no mass starvation
 in Europe. In the Sunday
 New York Times less than
 two weeks ago was a picture
 of a fat-well-fed Greek
 boy sitting in front of a
 huge set of shelves, - a tier
 piled to the ceiling - packed
 with black - marked ~~American~~
 -supplied canned goods.

As a commentator on the radio,
 who has been all over the
 Earth says: one can always
 know when mass starvation
 strikes in a country. The

People are on the Sidewalks³
begging for food. Starvation,
there, is in evidence everywhere.
● American people do need to
save - many of them do; but
● has any one in Washington
had any concern about the
countless thousands of decent
Americans dying from Starvation
each day? How do you suppose
two elderly people living on a
pension of \$65⁰⁰ a month are
faring? How do you suppose
people living on state
pensions of \$39⁵⁰ a month
as a member of elderly, retired,
widely women I know of are
● living out a wretched existence,

dying of malnutrition - slow &
starvation, & merely waiting for
the end? Has the president,
or any one else there in
Washington, ever thought of
sending free food to the
countless starving Americans?

A great number of people -
our safety group of the
immense middle class are
being destroyed, & driven
into helplessness & poverty,
so that the health of the
next-generation will be lowered
& they will not be able to
do life's work; and these
masses will become like the
great-hordes of disease &

Wretched human beings such as I
are seen in India & China.

To any one who spent more
than 50 years in Pittsburgh,
this sentimental concern over
these masses of people who
are as tough as nails is
a mystery. After 3 years
under a foreign power —
under Hitler & the Dutch
are changed not one whit
when it comes to treating
the Indonesians in the
same way. These Slavs,
Greeks, Magyars, & all the
rest of those Eastern and
South Eastern European groups

enjoy high-powered conflict. It's
is like champagne to them. I
never heard of a christening,
wedding, or funeral among
these types of immigrant
groups in Pittsburgh that
somehow wasn't stabbed &
usually killed. These people
in these have enormous
vitality & can live off
the simplest food imaginable.

There should be more exact
truth & a little more consistency
in what is told to the people
in this country if they are to
be expected to believe anything
at all. They are increasingly skeptical.
Did you know that within

The past month more than 7
600 packages of food from
that organization called "Care"
had been found in a Greek
warehouse on a wharf, by
some American newspaper
men, who were told when
the Greek authorities were
questioned, that the food
(flour, lard, etc) was not
wanted & was "unsuitable".
It is on its way back or
has probably reached here
by this time. When starving
Greeks are not allowed food
by the heads of their own
country, it is quite true

For Americans, if they've got 8
lousy dimes left - to step
out. The thing becomes fantastic.
● Try to think what these
● packages would mean to
people living on state
pensions of 29 & 49 dollars
a month. And then think
more.
Sincerely yours,
Mary Ellen Jones Irons

P. S. Many of us, from what we
● read, see, & hear would not be
● surprised to see this country go
into a state of infuriated
● isolationism when the next election
comes around.

October 13, 1947.

Dear Miss Armstrong:

Your letter commenting on my recent talk to the State Bank Supervisors would have had a prompt acknowledgment, but I have been waiting to obtain some reprints of the text and enclose a copy. It would appear from your letter that you had seen only some of the excerpts from my talk and they seem to have given a somewhat erroneous impression.

I certainly agree with you about the distress that inflation causes, particularly for fixed income groups, and feel that the present inadequate pensions should be supplemented by at least \$35.00 a month more. It would also be equitable to provide an exemption in the income tax law for these pensioners who have so little.

It would be a great misfortune, in my opinion, for the Country to revert to what you call "infuriated Isolationism", but I think it quite unlikely because none

Miss Armstrong

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of the aspirants for the Presidency of any party, so far as I am aware, proposes any such thing.

Sincerely yours,

M. S. Eccles,
Chairman.

Enclosure

Miss Mary Ellen Armstrong,
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ET:ra