

# WOMEN WANTED

By Y. BAR-COHEN

## WOMEN WANTED

Women wanted to form and join an auxiliary for the purpose of helping feed the needy in your own home-town. Light work and little pay but large reward in satisfaction. Apply for interview any Thursday, 10 a.m., rear of Beth Jacob Congregation, Epiphany Street near Fullerton. Ask for Charlie Sable.

The above classified advertisement means exactly what it says, but I'll come to that later, maybe not at all, or just refer to it. I have a great deal of respect for our Jewish women, they have good understanding and haven't as yet failed to recognize a duty.

This is a newspaperman's story, an eye-witness story, and if written under the spell of the hour I spent in the dingy room back of an old synagogue on the Hill, it would have been just a sob story, but a true sob story, and a play on the feelings of the readers, but it is being written days later following many inquiries and investigations, who were among those lined up to receive just a little more of and private talks with individuals that which makes a difference, the difference being that of a meager meal to that of what is almost a banquet.

For many, the name Lechem-Aniyum is hard to pronounce or

the city, including Squirrel Hill. Only the few know the address, and the few also know when the emergency does not exist any longer. Words accompanied by tears of gratitude, tell them.

Long before noon men, women and women with children arrive. They bring their own market bags and wait in line for their turn. They are not all Jews, non-Jews among them, a white-haired Irish grandmother with an orphaned grandchild clinging to her, and a young woman with dark latin features and a baby in her arms, her husband disappeared, her family can help her but little. Others in like unfortunate positions, and some of the colored race, poor folk throwing appreciative glances toward those who aid them regardless of race, color or creed.

I read the letters of ministers and priests of neighborhood churches, white and colored, asking that this or that family be helped with a food basket for the period of their need. I read also their words of appreciation. I read also letters from former recipients who with their simple thank you for being helped enclosed also their own small contribution so that



spell out, but for the seventy-five families, and who knows how many hundreds and thousands before, it is just another name for human-kindness. And that is what Lechem-Aniyum means, bread for the poor, baskets filled with food, one day in the week, to supplement the lean cupboard.

Lechem-Aniyum is not a new name in the community, it is now twenty-five years old and is celebrating its silver anniversary, but there is nothing to celebrate, the misery of others is not a subject for celebration, it is more a sad commentary on our system which makes the need for such an organization imperative. If to celebrate at all it should be in recognition of the few, and one particularly, who by their tenacity, resoluteness of purpose, stubborn resolve that come what may there shall be no empty baskets for those who need them full, in honor of those and of the one, the celebration then in proper.

Each Thursday of the week, and if a holiday it is prior to that, as early as six o'clock in the morning, two or three men who are later joined by a few women, all volunteers, begin to unload the truck and assort what it contained; bread, meat, fish, fruit, vegetables and dairy products. When the load is light the task is harder.

By nine o'clock the filling in of some seventy-five baskets begins, some containing less and others more, for the larger families, and a number are set aside, these are for delivery into homes, private homes, in the several sections of

others may be helped.

To our own Jewish Defense organizations and promoters of goodwill I would say; that is the form of goodwill that is lasting and unquestionable. Take a lesson out of it and review your own approach.

One by one these people leave. But before that you often hear small voices -- instead of the apples would you give me another bread? -- or -- instead of the tomatoes would you give that bar of chocolate for my little girl as you gave the other lady?

You hear these requests, pitiful and often insignificant requests, but of such importance to those who make them that you wonder if you are ever right in your conclusions and opinions. That occasional bar of chocolate has a fuller meaning for that mother that a festive table for any of my readers.

By three o'clock not a morsel is left and after six hours on their feet, the few volunteers are not tired but worried, several, who were last in the line need leave empty-handed. But they do not. After a little wait two of the volunteer workers return from a nearby food market with filled bags and it can never be said one left empty-handed. Only after that, tiredness is felt.

And immediately following that Thursday begins the worrying for the next. And here it is but proper to place on the honor-list those who meet human misery face to face, week after week, from dawn till the last echo in that room, where nothing but debris is left

to be swept up, they are:

Mrs. Sophie Weiss, Mrs. Mary Alpern, Mrs. Libbie Tobe, Charles R. Sable, Dave Grotstein, Ben Edelstein, Rev. Wm. Hofstadter, Jacob Ryave and Joseph Frischman.

Were the purpose of this story to call attention to names creditably identified with Lechem-Aniyum I would need in addition to Max Rogal name others, but they will forgive me if I do not, while I know a few it would be unjust to others, if omitted. The one big name that stands out among all is that of Charles R. Sable.

Charlie Sable, as he is known better, is one of the most colorful figures in the community, the rough and tumble type, with a free tongue, that says what he means, with a living heart that is bigger than his size. But for him there would be no Lechem-Aniyum, there would be no filled baskets, and there would be no open door which invites all to enter and leave laden with that which makes a difference to them.

Charlie Sable leaves with a truck for the produce yards and what he does not get he pays for himself. He bargains with food merchants, buys with Lechem-Aniyum funds at ridiculous prices bread, meats, fish, other products, and when you add it up to a sum of twenty thousand dollars for the year it cost the Lechem-Aniyum only five. And when you add up that which he orders charged to him directly he is the largest contributor of all, with the sum reaching the figure of two thousand dollars, often more, seldom less. And that's year after year.

And may it be remembered, the Lechem-Aniyum is not an organized dues-paying body. It is a group of men, and some women, who in recognizing its great humanitarian value are giving of themselves so that on a Thursday there may be filled baskets for those who need them. And what is additionally to the great credit of Charlie Sable, they do not want to let him down. That is a tribute to the man as well as the cause.

While Charlie Sable carries his herculean task without a murmur and without reproach to others who could and should have eased him of the heavy burden, the entire Jewish community benefits from his efforts. I repeat, the defense agencies accomplish less with the expenditure of large sums in the field of goodwill and racial relations than the Lechem-Aniyum through Charlie Sable, with an insignificant sum, does in the area where such problems take root.

We consider it unfair to a handful of men to let them carry the entire burden of such a relief project. Charlie Sable, Max Rogal, Bennie Neaman, Joe Rossen, Dave Horvitz, Itamar Lando, Ben Edelstein, and the very few more whose names I do not recall, do more than their share, and Charlie Sable may, become tired, it may tax his health, it is therefore imperative that the organization be widened, and that is why the classified want-ad at the beginning of this story.

The Jewish women of Pittsburgh have proven themselves again and again. Not only are they good organizers but they also accomplish that which they set out to do. And no less than the men they identify themselves not with one but several public causes. It is time for the Jewish women to make also Lechem-Aniyum their cause.

The requirements are not large. A minimum of effort will be

sufficient for the maximum in results. Modest dues could provide the most what is needed. It needs only a beginning. There should be someone, or some group among our readers, to rise to the occasion. Let there be formed an auxiliary. Help those who need help. Answer that want-ad, see for yourself the scene in that little back room in the synagogue up on the Hill, next Thursday, or the next, and do something about it. I am ending my story, now begin yours.

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