

B. Gotsfeld  
29 Yona Hanavi St.  
Tel Aviv, 25.9.1940

The Executive Board  
Mizrachi Women's Organization of America  
1133 Broadway  
New York

Dear Friends:

Our cables must have crossed on the way as I received yours on Monday the 16th of September.

You have no idea how much encouragement we derived from it and G-d knows we are greatly in need of it just now. Since the tragic events of last week Palestine seems to have been in the limelight and cables of sympathy came pouring in from all over the world, not to mention those coming from local communities, institutions and personages of high status.

You would be surprised at the speed at which life resumed its normal course. Repairs on destroyed property are being carried out and active steps are being taken to help the families left destitute, and needless to say that the efforts of the medical profession to save the lives of the many serious wounded are enormous.

Though in the first few days after the occurrence there was a tendency of exodus from the city, it very quickly slackened down and was limited in the main to women and children. The latter do not lose by it as the school year starts after Yom Tov. Otherwise everybody remain at their posts determined not to give in and not to yield even one inch. We suffered a terrible blow, but it was not a knock out one as the barbarous enemy intended it to be, life here goes on and people are only more strengthened in their determination to do all they can in helping the cause of democracy. On the one hand an active collection is being carried on - with excellent results - for a fighter plane, while on the other Palestinian youth is eagerly responding to the opportunity offered for enlistment in the army. The women on their part "do their bit" in the manifold branches of social services.

Under these circumstances you will undoubtedly understand how happy I was of your acceptance of the budget which will allow us to carry on our work, which branched off and extended from the educational one in the beginning to a constructive social one in its broad sense, meeting the needs of the hour.

As I already mentioned to you, our schools are a good deal more than merely educational institutions and through their medium we extend welcome hospitality to many guests. These are not only the relatives of the girls, but all the members of the Kibbutz Hadati. Members of the religious Youth Aliya consider the Beth Zeiroth their home and often ask to be accepted for Yom Tov, on their vacations when they come to Jerusalem. There are many parents and relatives of the girls who come to Palestine with an entire lack of means and for the first few weeks we extend to them our welcome and material assistance.

During the last year an average of six meals a day were served at the school, making a total of 2190 meals!

In the sewing room the girls are busy on remodelling clothes which they can no longer wear into small garments, which are given to the children in the kindergartens in the poorer quarters.

An enormous help to the Kibutzim are our girls who come trained and introduce into the Kibutz the scientific approach to work which is such an asset. Besides they are fully equipped with beds, mattresses, mosquito nets and work clothes complete (shoes, overalls). It is this equipment given them by the Beth Zeiroth that helps the new groups to start their work.

The girls graduating our schools, mainly comers from distressed Europe, have faced great adversity in their young lives - illness, unemployment and changing of vocations, etc. They miss their families greatly and the school is to them the family they left behind, guiding them by counsel, in many cases giving them food, sometimes even providing quarters and medical aid.

I wish to mention here a certain incident. In the pocket of one of the coats from the clothes sent from the States, there was found a note from one Myerson, Omaha, Nebraska, requesting that the recipient correspond with her. It was given to a pupil in the Mizrahi Teachers Seminary, who wrote a letter at the given address, the copy of which I attach. It is a small thing, but I always feel that I should tell you of any indirect connection from Palestine, and that is why I mentioned this.

I close with best wishes for a very Happy New Year, a year of victory, of peace and happiness.

Sincerely yours,  
BESSIE GOTSFELD (SIGNED)