

lands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippine Commonwealth, Poland, Union of South Africa, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.\*

### WHAT THE AGREEMENT SAYS

There were few wasted words in the UNRRA pact ; its spirit, devoid of frills and formalities, was one of honest realism. The preamble plunged into the task ahead : The United Nations are "determined that immediately upon the liberation of any area by the armed forces of the United Nations or as a consequence of retreat of the enemy, the population thereof shall receive aid and relief from their sufferings, food, clothing and shelter, aid in the prevention of pestilence and in the recovery of the health of the people, and that preparation and arrangements shall be made for the return of prisoners and exiles to their homes and for assistance in the resumption of urgently needed agricultural and industrial production and the restoration of essential services."

In 10 business-like articles, the Agreement continued :

UNRRA has the authority to plan, coordinate and administer, in agreement with the military authorities, the foregoing measures for the relief of victims of war in areas liberated from Axis control.

The Administration is to have the power to acquire, hold and convey property, to enter into contracts and undertake obligations appropriate to its objectives and purposes.

Each member government is to name one representative to the Council of UNRRA. The Council is to be the policy-making body of the Administration and is to be convened not less than twice a year by the Central Committee, consisting of the representatives of China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Central Committee is to make policy decisions of an emergency nature between sessions of the Council. All such decisions, however, are to be open to reconsideration by the Council at any

---

\* The Danish Minister in Washington, Mr. Henrik de Kauffmann, attended the Council Meeting in his personal capacity.

of its regular or special sessions. The Central Committee is also to invite the participation of any member government in these meetings if a particular question involving that government is discussed.

Besides the Central Committee, the Agreement provides for the creation of a Committee on Supplies, composed of the members representing the countries likely to be the principal suppliers of food and services ; it also provides for regional Committees for Europe, and for the Far East, and for other regional or technical advisory committees which the Council may consider necessary.

The executive authority of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration is vested in a Director-General, appointed by the Council on the unanimous nomination of the Central Committee.

Under the Agreement each of the 44 member governments accepts the obligation, subject to the approval of its constitutional bodies, to contribute to the support of the Administration and to place at its disposal such supplies and resources as may be decided upon by the Council and approved by the respective national governments.

All purchases by any of the member governments made outside their own territories during the war for relief purposes may be made only after consultation with the Director-General, and are, so far as practicable, to be carried out through the appropriate United Nations' agency.

The Agreement stipulates that the Director-General shall not undertake activities in any area in which the military are operating without the consent of the military command, and that he will be subject to such control as the command may find necessary.

Thus was developed the framework for mobilizing the resources and energies of the United Nations. Concerted action was necessary, for one nation alone could not feed and relieve all the victims of aggression. It was now too plain that the prosperity and peace of any nation depended not upon bankrupt or prostrate peoples, but upon peoples who had food to eat and money with which to buy things.

Elected Director-General of UNRRA, Herbert H. Lehman declared : " We cannot make ourselves secure in a world in which millions of men, women and children are dying of want or by

epidemic. Let us recognize frankly that freedom from gripping want is a basic component of any enduring peace, and that if the world is to have any hope of lasting peace and a stable economy we must all cooperate wholeheartedly to the end that the liberated peoples are restored as rapidly as possible to a self-sustaining basis.

“The fate of all United Nations’ efforts to assure a world of security and of lasting peace may well be largely influenced by the success of this, their first joint effort in relief and rehabilitation.”

### AT ATLANTIC CITY—THE WORK BEGINS

The Agreement was signed in Washington on November 9, and the delegates then moved to Atlantic City for the first meeting of UNRRA’s Council. By Wednesday, November 10, some 600 diplomats, experts, scientists and secretaries had assembled at the Claridge Hotel to carry out the terms of the agreement signed the day before. It was the largest international gathering ever held within the United States, and the second to take place in one year.

The problems facing the delegates were many and complex: How to get sugar from the Caribbean countries, rice and coffee from Brazil, beans from Chile, fish from Newfoundland, to the liberated countries in the fastest possible time? How to gather seed, farm machinery, fuel, medical supplies? How to accomplish the stupendous task of repatriating some 20 to 30,000,000 people in Europe alone, for example, refugees from Axis-conquered lands and enslaved workers? How to work out a formula for the equitable sharing of financial responsibility among the United Nations? How to integrate UNRRA’s job with governmental agencies at present organizing supplies for war-time needs and with private war-relief groups already engaged in aiding Axis victims?

None of these problems was avoided. The very nature of the Conference encouraged their solution.

When they reached Atlantic City, the delegates had in their hands the Agreement setting up the organization; their work then was to lay down the broad principles of policy.