

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.

UNRRA, as distinct from the permanent organization on food and agriculture, was temporary ; it was emergency. It might have to start large-scale operations in a few months ; it might have to function in the midst of war.

COMMITTEES ARE SET UP

Under the chairmanship of Dean Acheson, Member of the Council for the United States, the UNRRA Council divided its agenda into four main committees and fifteen sub-committees. The Committee on Ad Hoc Committees acted as the steering agency of the session.

The UNRRA committees did not attempt to legislate, i.e. to draw up international conventions or treaties to be signed ; what began on November 10 at Atlantic City amounted to business deliberations by nations having urgent stakes in setting up an organization that could act at once.

Committee I on Organization and Administration considered in its four sub-committees the following items : The composition and functions of the regional Committees for Europe and the Far East, together with the Standing Technical Committees on Agriculture, Displaced Persons, Health, Industrial Rehabilitation and Welfare ; rules and procedures of the Council and its Standing Committees ; personnel policies and the administrative budget.

Committee II on General Policy and its three sub-committees dealt with the broad policies of the Administration, its relations with governments and with inter-governmental bodies.

Committee III on Supply and Finance had one sub-committee to study the financial plan for the Administration, and another to examine the procedures for ascertaining and meeting deficits in supplies. It was also charged with setting up the Standing Committees on Supply and Financial Control and with defining their functions.

Committee IV on Relief and Rehabilitation Policies was divided into six sub-committees engaged in discussing technical aspects of relief distribution, health and medical care, welfare services and voluntary relief agencies, assistance to displaced persons, agri-