

5. THE ATTITUDE OF ERO TO TRACING

Although the principle of UNRRA participation in some form in the work of tracing had long been accepted and had been embodied in the ERO reply to the SHAME request of March 31st 1945 relating to Forwarding Bureaux, nevertheless ERO was extremely slow in taking appropriate action. As late as September 5th 1945, Col. Schottland, then Chief of ~~Relief~~ Relief Services at CHQ/UNRRA, informed ERO of the decision of the Working Group which was being laid before the Control Council and emphasised that this made it imperative that UNRRA should fulfil the commitments already made. Only five employees had been assigned to the CTB since July 4th and the existing staff were so discouraged that they were seeking release from their duties. Forty additional personnel were urgently requested from the Mobilisation and Tracing Base at Granville.

Early in 1946, Mr. G.W. Rabinoff, Deputy Director of Displaced Persons Division ERO, was sent out to Arolsen to discuss the budget proposals of CTB which had been prepared by Col. Bowring. In February, Washington grew uneasy about the apparent tendency of CTB to extend its scope of activities into fields outside the UNRRA Mandate. ERO also found a tendency to take on functions which should be left in the hands of the National Tracing Bureaux. While these differences with Arolsen may have arisen from misunderstanding the extension of tracing activities to enemy relatives of United Nations nationals was part of CDPX policy as enunciated on July 24th nevertheless there was a feeling that Col. Bowring was being carried away by his enthusiasm and being held in check by the Chief of Operations. Accordingly a Working Party was formed in ERO under the chairmanship of Mr. Rabinoff to formulate more clearly the role that UNRRA should play in the Central Tracing Bureau. The result of the efforts of the Working Party were embodied in a policy statement which was placed before the Administrative Council by the Chief of Relief Services on February 20th 1946. The document, entitled "UNRRA policy for Tracing Activities in Germany", was agreed to by the Council and the policy was thereupon sent to General Morgan by General Sir Humphrey Gale, Personal Representative of the Director General of UNRRA European Office, London, on 22nd February. It was worded as follows:

2. THE HISTORY OF THE TRADING

Although the principle of URM participation in new form in the  
 part of trading had not been accepted and had been embodied in the 1930 re-  
 sults to the URM request of March 1931 relating to Forwarding business,  
 nevertheless URM was extremely active in taking appropriate action. As late as  
 September 25th 1931, Col. Robinson, then Chief of URM's British services  
 as URM/URMA, informed URM of the decision of the Working Group which was  
 being laid before the Control Council and explained that this was its im-  
 perative that URM should fulfil the conditions already made. Only five  
 employees had been assigned to the URM since July 1931 and the existing staff  
 were so discouraged that they were seeking release from their duties. Party  
 additional personnel were urgently requested from the Mobilisation and  
 Trading Base at Birmmham.

Early in 1932, Mr. G.W. Roberts, Deputy Director of Dispatches Per-

sons Division URM, was sent out to London to discuss the budget proposals  
 of URM which had been prepared by Col. Bowring. In February, 1932, URM  
 grew uneasy about the apparent tendency of URM to extend the scope of activi-  
 ties into fields outside the URM mandate. URM also found a tendency  
 to take on functions which should be left in the hands of the National Tra-  
 ding Bureau. Again this difference with London may have arisen from  
 misunderstanding the extension of trading activities to enemy relatives of  
 United Nations nationals was part of URM policy as enunciated on July 25th  
 nevertheless there was a feeling that Col. Bowring was being carried away by  
 the enthusiasm and being held in check by the Chief of Operations.

Accordingly a Working Party was formed in URM under the chairmanship of  
 Mr. Roberts to formulate more clearly the role that URM should play in the  
 URM Trading Bureau. The results of the efforts of the Working Party were  
 embodied in a policy statement which was placed before the Administrative  
 Council by the Chief of British Services on February 20th 1932. The document  
 entitled "URM Policy for Trading Activities in Germany", was agreed to by  
 the Council and the policy was thereafter given a general sanction by General  
 the Shipping Staff, Personal Representative of the Economic Council of URM  
 European Office, London, on 23rd February. It was worded as follows:

" UNRRA POLICY FOR TRACING ACTIVITIES  
IN GERMANY "

The following policy has been adopted by the ERO in relation to UNRRA tracing activities in Germany.

1. UNRRA can accept responsibility for tracing persons falling under the definitions of the Council Resolutions as eligible for UNRRA care. This includes persons at present receiving care from UNRRA in Germany, persons eligible for but not in receipt of such care and persons technically eligible for such care but now dead.

2. UNRRA cannot accept responsibility for tracing any Germans <sup>c/</sup> except victims of Nazi persecution.

3. Pending establishment of direct channels to appropriate agencies, UNRRA can accept responsibility for routing enquiries regarding persons who may not be eligible.

4. The Chief of Operations in Germany is responsible for negotiations with the Allied Control Authority regarding UNRRA functions for tracing and their relationship to the total activities for tracing in Germany.

5. The ERO is responsible for coordinating UNRRA policy with the policy of National Tracing Bureaux, in so far as it concerns those persons eligible for UNRRA care.

(The following statement prepared by the Central Tracing Bureau was accepted as being a correct interpretation of paragraph No.5)

ERO is responsible for the coordination of tracing policy throughout its sphere of influence, including Germany; in Germany it will discharge that responsibility through the Central Tracing Bureau. On tracing problems regarding Germany, the CTB will deal directly with the NTBs under the policies established by ERO."

General Morgan in reply said that the general policy as stated was perfectly clear and did not differ in any respect from the policy already in operation.

The new policy statement emphasised that UNRRA could only trace persons falling under the definitions of the Council Resolutions as eligible for UNRRA care. UNRRA could not accept responsibility for tracing any Germans except victims of Nazi persecution. CEM should therefore negotiate with CTB and suggest the formation of a German Tracing Unit working under the COG in the same way as CTB. A Mail Intake Office under the COG would sort incoming enquiries and transfer them to the Tracing Unit concerned. On March 18th the Coordinating Committee of COG considered at its 44th Meeting the proposal to establish a Tracing Bureau for missing Germans, but owing to disagreement the proposal was withdrawn. However, UNRRA from that time onwards adhered rigorously to the Tracing Policy which was limited by the Council Resolutions.

THE POLICY FOR THE TREATMENT OF  
IN A TREATY

The following policy has been adopted by the EEO in relation to

German trading activities in Germany.

1. Where an accept responsibility for trading persons falling under the definitions of the Council Resolutions as eligible for EEO care, this includes persons at present receiving care from EEO in Germany, persons eligible for but not in receipt of such care and persons temporarily eligible for such care but not such.
2. Where cannot accept responsibility for trading any German except victims of Nazi persecution.
3. Trading establishment of direct channels to appropriate agencies, EEO can accept responsibility for trading activities regarding persons who may not be eligible.
4. The Chief of Operations in Germany is responsible for negotiations with the Allied Control Authority regarding EEO functions for trading and their relationship to the local activities for trading in Germany.
5. The EEO is responsible for coordinating EEO's policy with the policy of National Trading Bureau, in so far as it concerns those persons eligible for EEO care.

(The following statement prepared by the Central Trading Bureau was accepted as being a correct interpretation of paragraph 10.2.)

EEO is responsible for the coordination of trading policy throughout the sphere of influence, including Germany, in Germany it will discharge that responsibility through the Central Trading Bureau. On trading problems regarding Germany, the CTR will deal directly with the EEO under the policy established by EEO.

General Morgan in reply said that the general policy as stated was

entirely clear and did not differ in any respect from the policy already

in operation.

The new policy statement emphasized that EEO could only trade

persons falling under the definitions of the Council Resolutions as eligible

for EEO care. EEO could not accept responsibility for trading any

persons except victims of Nazi persecution. CTR should therefore negotiate

with CTR and suggest the formation of a German Trading Unit working under

the CTR in the same way as CTR. A full liaison office under the CTR would

be handling enquiries and transfer them to the Trading Unit concerned.

At a meeting of the Coordinating Committee of CTR convened at the last meeting

of the Council on 18th March 1948 a proposal to establish a Trading Bureau for Germany was put forward, but when

the proposal was discussed the proposal was withdrawn. However, EEO is from that time

adhered rigorously to the Trading Policy which was laid by the

Council Resolutions.

During March 1946, Miss S.J. Warner, Director of the Foreign Relations Department of the British Red Cross, was taken on by ERO on a temporary basis as a Consultant of Tracing. Early in April she was sent to Germany and Austria to investigate the situation and advise ERO. On her return to London, Miss Warner presented a long and valuable report, including recommendations with regard to the budget. She was able to show that the description of the duties of Director of CTB in the budget request contained sentences which went beyond the mandate contained in Sir Humphrey Gale's memorandum sent to General Morgan of February 22nd. She also advised that the records of missing persons which had been accumulated in considerable quantities by CTB ought to be handed over to the permanent care of some organisation such as the United Nations Organisation or the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. She suggested that UNRRA might sound the latter on their willingness to undertake such a function, and might in due course approach UNO officially on the subject.

Miss Warner expressed her view that "UNRRA ERO could well recommend to UNO that the tracing and recording of missing and displaced persons could now be carried out without regard to the political action during the war of the original country of these unfortunate people - with the sole exception of the German persons making enquiries for Germans....." She recommended "that the tracing and recording of displaced and missing persons should now be regarded as the humanitarian responsibility of all civilised nations working together."

#### 6. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ON TRACING.

During the lifetime of UNRRA three international conferences have been held with representatives of National Tracing Bureaux at which UNRRA representatives have been present.

On June 25th, 1946 ERO agreed that UNRRA should be represented at the Conference called by the Polish Government at Warsaw by an official of the CTB, but this official must not take any responsibility for coordinating UNRRA policy with that of the National Tracing Bureaux or for tracing activities regarding persons not eligible for UNRRA care.