

on behalf of UNRRA, Mr. Martini records that:

"The members of the Conference were taking as an accomplished fact the preliminary and tentative assurances which had been given at Geneva on and following 12th February to the effect that IRO would sponsor completely a tracing service which would meet the needs of all national governments."

He went on to make the following important points:

"The UNRRA representative pointed out informally the difficulties and limitations dependent from IRO sponsorship for the usual reasons, and primarily for the reason that any Refugee Organization working with limited funds would present to National Tracing Bureaux many of the limitations which from their standpoint UNRRA's tracing activities now brought about.

It was pointed out that the IRO or any Refugee Organization would presumably concern itself primarily with the care and tracing of living refugees and their relatives living or deceased. The National Tracing Bureaux, on the other hand, are seeking to establish what would be a service which would provide Home Governments with records and documentation on residence and employment within Germany of their citizens during the war years, for the purpose of establishing eligibility or non-eligibility for government benefits and for other legal documentations not primarily of a tracing nature.

The National Tracing Bureaux representatives, with the exception of the "Directeur General du Commissariat Belge au Repatriement", were under the impression that the operations required would be of a year or two's duration."

Mr. Martini also urged the members of the Conference to make representations to assure the re-location of CTB at Berlin.

It was later found, however, that accommodation in Berlin was absolutely impossible to secure, and it was therefore eventually decided, in spite of everything, to leave the Central Tracing Bureau at Arolsen.

(3rd July 1947).

8. CONCLUDING REMARK

There is one major question which has been posed by the circumstances and manner in which UNRRA's tracing responsibilities in Germany may have been partially demobilized. It is the question whether a Central Tracing Bureau was ever required and whether it would not, in the circumstances, have been better if the respective Zone Tracing Bureaux had led an entirely autonomous existence to that of any National Tracing Bureau.

on behalf of WETA, Mr. Marshall reports that:

"The members of the Conference were taking as an accomplished fact the preliminary and tentative arrangements which had been made at Geneva on and following 12th February in the effort to bring the two sides together on a strategic service which would meet the needs of all national Governments."

It went on to state the following important points:

"The WETA representative pointed out that the WETA's main task and immediate responsibility was to bring about a meeting of the two sides on a basis of mutual respect and equality for the reasons that any failure to do so would mean a complete breakdown of the WETA's work and would mean the end of the WETA's activities as a strategic service."

It was pointed out that the WETA or any other organization would be unable to function effectively with the two sides trading on a basis of mutual respect and equality. The National Trading Bureau, on the other hand, are seeking to establish what would be a service which would provide those Governments with records and documentation on relations and engagements with Germany of their citizens during the war for the purpose of establishing eligibility for government benefits and for other legal documents not primarily of a trading nature.

The National Trading Bureau representatives, with the exception of the Director General in Charge of Administration, were under the impression that the operations required would be of a year or two's duration."

Mr. Marshall also urged the members of the Conference to make

representations to ensure the re-formation of WETA at Berlin.

It was later found, however, that accommodation in Berlin was ab-

solutely impossible to secure, and it was therefore eventually decided to

agree of everything, to leave the Central Trading Bureau at Geneva.

(1st July 1947)

### 3. CONCERNING WETA

There is one major question which has been posed by the circumstances and manner in which WETA's trading responsibilities in Germany may have been partially described. It is the question whether a Central Trading Bureau was ever required and whether it would not, in the circumstances, have been better if the respective home Trading Bureaux had had an entirely autonomous existence to that of any National Trading Bureau.

It is obvious that at the time there were several influences which favoured the creation of a Central Office. The first, perhaps, was the mere fact that tracing developed in the first instance under SILMF, which was itself a combined organization. The second influence was undoubtedly that of Col. Bowring who had been responsible for setting up and developing the Tracing Bureau in the British Zone, and who had put forward plans for the tracing of missing persons of Allied nationality throughout Germany, which certainly influenced the thinking of the Working Group on Tracing of the PWMP Division CCG, and, indeed, the PWMP Division itself. At a Conference at Bad Oeyenhausen, Col. Bowring stated "that the tracing of missing persons in all parts of Germany would not be fully successful unless centralised as much as possible". Early in September Miss de la Pole at CTB analysed 886 enquiries which had been received by the British Zone Tracing Bureau. It was found that 304 of these enquiries could be identified in the CTB index and information upon them found there. In her concluding remarks Miss de la Pole wrote: "The fact that 45 % of the enquiries which had gone direct to the British Zone without previously clearing through CTB were identified in our index, is surprising and has important implications regarding the value of central clearance of all enquiries. This will be increasingly true as the master index becomes more and more complete, not only with regard to persons being sought, but also as we continue to add to the index information regarding known locations of DPs and death records of DPs."

While the tracing functions of CTB under the run-down scheme have been transferred to the Zone Tracing Bureaux which are empowered to act with complete autonomy in communication with National Tracing Bureaux, it was still felt that the maintenance of the Reference Library of Records was a function which should continue to be carried out centrally. Moreover, the PWMP Directorate of CCG evidently felt very strongly that this was the case. Thus, while some doubt might be cast on the question whether, at later phases of the tracing operation, the "post-office" function of CTB were justified, there would seem to exist no reasonable doubt about the importance of other aspects of the work. Miss Gibbons, in a minute to the PRDC, said that "the Central Tracing Bureau in Germany is performing functions extremely important to members of the United Nations by (a) centralising

It is noted that at the time there were several influences which  
 favored the creation of a General Staff. The first, perhaps, was the  
 fact that trading developed in the first instance under British, which was  
 itself a combined organization. The second influence was undoubtedly  
 that of Col. Bowring who had been responsible for setting up and develop-  
 ing the trading business in the British Army, and who had put forward plans  
 for the trading of military persons of Allied nationality throughout Germany,  
 which certainly followed the thinking of the Working Group on Trading of  
 the PWR Division GOC, and indeed, the PWR Division itself. At a Con-  
 ference at Red Spinnaker, Col. Bowring stated "that the trading of mis-  
 sionary persons in all parts of Germany would not be fully successful unless  
 controlled as much as possible". Only in September 1945 is it to be  
 that 500 companies which had been received by the British Zone  
 Trading Bureau. It was found that 50% of these companies could be in-  
 cluded in the GIB index and information was then found there. In her con-  
 cluding remarks Miss de la Motte stated "The fact that 50% of the compa-  
 nies which had gone ahead to the British Zone without previously clearing  
 through GIB were identified in our index, is surprising and has important  
 implications regarding the value of central clearance of all companies.  
 This will be investigated as to the matter being responsible and more  
 complete, not only with regard to persons being sought, but also as to  
 conditions to add to the index information regarding known locations of  
 IP's and death records of IP's."

While the trading functions of GIB under the two-year scheme have  
 been transferred to the new Trading Bureau which is expected to act  
 with complete autonomy in consultation with National Trading Bureau, it  
 was still felt that the maintenance of the reference library of records was  
 a function which should continue to be carried out centrally. However,  
 the PWR Directorate of GIB evidently felt very strongly that this was the  
 case. Thus, while some doubt might be cast on the question whether, as in  
 the phases of the trading operation, the "post-office" function of GIB was  
 justified, there would seem to exist no reasonable doubt about the impor-  
 tance of other aspects of the work. Miss Gibson, in a minute to the PWR,  
 said that "the General Trading Bureau in Germany is performing functions  
 extremely important to members of the United Nations by (a) centralizing

records for Allied nationals who were displaced, imprisoned or killed in Germany; and (b) coordinating tracing of individuals."

9. THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE I.R.O. (P.C.I.R.O.)

On 15th December 1946, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to create an International Refugee Organization (I.R.O.) as its agency to deal with all aspects of the displaced persons and refugees problem.

At the same time an Agreement on Interim Measures was also adopted, under which a Preparatory Commission for the IRO was to be established, pending the entry into force of the Constitution. It was to take all necessary and practical measures for bringing the organization itself into effective operation as soon as possible.

On 31st December 1946, the requisite eight governments having signed the Constitution, the Secretary General of the U.N.O. convened the first session of P.C.I.R.O. to be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, from 11-21 February 1947. It was also attended by representatives of the UNRRA and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, who had been in constant contact with PCIRO during the drafting of the IRO Constitution.

As successor agency of IGCR and UNRRA, IRO was not necessarily to take over the tracing activities so far pursued by the latter. As a matter of fact several members of PCIRO were very reluctant to do so. And it was only on the very strong pressure and insistence on the part of the French Government particularly, who made it even a condition for their participation in IRO, that PCIRO finally accepted to assume the responsibility of taking over the tracing.

The following is the first indication of PCIRO's final acceptance (Doct.No.Prep./27 dated 21st February 1947).

"The preparatory Commission, taking into consideration the results already obtained by the CEB, considering as essential the continuation of the activities of the CEB, notes with satisfaction the declaration of UNRRA according to which this organization has undertaken generally to continue operating the CEB until 30 June 1947, and directs the Executive Secretary to proceed to the study of the special problem raised by the continuation of the activities of the CEB after 30 June 1947 - and in particular activities relating to the use of documents, individual search, wave and press tracing, child tracing - and to put forward all necessary plans on this subject in connection with the entry into operation of the International Refugee Organization."