

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; agricultural rehabilitation; and rehabilitation of industries, transport, and essential services.

Altogether, there were more than one hundred and fifty meetings of the main Committees, sub-committees, and drafting groups, some of which had almost daily sessions. The results of these deliberations are summarized in the Committee reports, and the policy resolutions which the Council adopted in the final stages of the Atlantic City session. The following are brief comments on certain of the more important issues that arose, having regard particularly to New Zealand's special interests and responsibilities.

The problem dealt with at Atlantic City fell into five main groups:—

- (1) In the first place, the Council had to decide what was to be the scope of UNRRA's activities. In particular, this turned on the interpretation of the second capital "R" in the Administration's abbreviated title. How far in relation to Europe and to Asia was rehabilitation to be considered as implying relatively long-term measures of general post-war economic reorganization of Europe and Asia? Was it to be strictly interpreted in terms of temporary aid in the restoration and resumption, as quickly as possible, of essential industries and services?
- (2) The second problem was that of procurement. How was UNRRA to procure the supplies of food, clothing, machinery, tools, and other things which would be needed for the terribly urgent task that lay ahead? This problem, it speedily became apparent, resolved itself into the issue of whether or not UNRRA was to act through the existing Combined Boards (on food, raw materials, shipping, production, and resources), whether it should urge the adaptation in any essential respect of this Combined Board machinery, or whether it should endeavour to act independently?
- (3) The third problem, discussed concurrently with discussions of the scope of UNRRA and its method of securing supplies, was that of distribution. Here the core of the problem was whether UNRRA should itself distribute relief supplies in the liberated areas, or whether this should be undertaken exclusively by the national Governments or other responsible authorities in such areas.
- (4) The fourth problem was perhaps even more important. It was the problem of finance. Where was the money for UNRRA to come from? Which countries should be asked to contribute, and in what proportions? Should contributions be in money or in kind?
- (5) The fifth problem was that of the organization of the Administration and its Standing Committees. What staff should the Director-General have? At what salaries and under what conditions should they be employed? What advisory and technical Committees were necessary, and how should their functions be defined?

On all these matters, though in varying degrees, provisional decisions had already been made by the most important interested countries. The Council debates were, however, real debates, and though the margin within which independent decisions could be made was somewhat narrow, the Council did more than merely register decisions arrived at beforehand.

THE SCOPE OF UNRRA'S ACTIVITIES

It became rapidly clear at Atlantic City that it would not be possible for UNRRA to assume responsibility for any long-range, post-war economic reconstruction. Throughout the Council's deliberations, in fact, no serious disagreement was expressed with the view that UNRRA's activities should be strictly limited to relief and rehabilitation measures, with the major emphasis upon relief. Thus the supplies which the Administration is to make available have been defined in a Resolution of the Council as:—

- (1) Essential consumer goods for immediate needs such as food, fuel, clothing, shelter, and medical supplies;
- (2) Supplies and materials such as seeds, fertilizers, raw materials, fishing equipment, machinery, and spare parts.

With regard to this second category, the general consensus of opinion was that rehabilitation supplies might be defined generally as articles which will permit a recipient country to solve its own relief problems more efficiently and more rapidly than would be the case if such supplies had to be met by the shipping of actual consumption goods into that country. In addition to material supplies, it was agreed that UNRRA should furnish essential services—for example, medical aid and assistance in the repatriation of displaced persons; the rehabilitation of public utilities in so far as these can be restored for immediate needs, and assistance in procuring equipment for schools and universities. The difficulty of drawing any hard-and-fast line between rehabilitation and reconstruction, particularly in relation to agriculture and industry, was not unappreciated, but there was a strong feeling, not least on the part of those who represented occupied countries, that UNRRA should be conceived and administered as a temporary organization which should not concern itself with any projects other than those directly related to relief as such, or to rehabilitation, interpreted rather narrowly to cover the restoration of the basic elements in national economies. It could assist in the re-equipment of industries and farms, since the need would then be lessened for imported relief supplies; but long-range reconstruction was definitely eliminated from the scope of its agreed activities. Its aim, in short, was held to be that of helping people to help themselves as soon as possible.