

view) of the United Kingdom, United States, or Dominion Governments. Clearly, too, the Combined Board machinery and procedure constitutes an essential control for the "effective prosecution of the war." There was, therefore, no feasible alternative to granting these organizations the same powers and authority with respect to supplies for relief purposes as they already have with respect to supplies for war purposes. This arrangement has the great advantage of maintaining centralized control through the period of scarcity ahead and of avoiding the possibility of UNRRA, or of individual countries, intensifying present shortages by building up reserve stocks against a future which might be an indefinite time in arriving.

There remained, however, the problem as to whether any nation not represented on the Boards should be permitted to have direct access to them? This issue was naturally pressed with some vigour by those smaller nations of Europe (and by France), which, in spite of Axis occupation, may be classed as supplying nations by virtue of their shipping or colonial resources, or which, by virtue of their gold and foreign exchange holdings, are in a position to pay in full for any relief supplies they may acquire. This, however, would have left other countries such as Poland, Greece, and Yugoslavia, who lack the means of paying for the supplies and assistance of which they are in desperate need, at a grave disadvantage.

Some compromise, therefore, had to be reached. It was finally decided that countries could go to the Combined Boards direct, but that "it will be an essential part of the functions of the Administration to secure a fair distribution of goods which are in short supply and of shipping services to and among the various areas liberated or to be liberated. For this purpose the Administration must have full knowledge of all the relief and rehabilitation import requirements of such areas, whatever arrangements may be contemplated for procurement or finance. Therefore, member Governments shall keep the Administration fully informed of their requirements and programmes of intended purchases. The Director-General may present to the inter-governmental allocating agencies such recommendations or objections as he may deem necessary to obtain a fair distribution to and among both liberated and to be liberated areas." In addition, the Director-General was required to present before the allocating agencies—the Combined Boards in most cases—"the over-all requirements for relief and rehabilitation of all areas liberated and to be liberated in order to permit global consideration of these needs with other needs." It was also agreed that he may present the particular requirements of any country for which the assistance of the Administration is requested.

Thus the Combined Boards will retain the final decision, at least as long as any military supply problem is involved either in Europe or the Far East, but there is an understanding that the Director-General of UNRRA, while not possessing any formal "veto" power over the allocation of relief and rehabilitation supplies, will, nevertheless, "be fully consulted by the inter-governmental allocating agencies when any matter touching the interests of the Administration is under discussion."

One further decision of some importance, in connection with procurement policy, was the decision that the Director-General should make use, wherever possible, of established national agencies concerned with procurement, handling, storage, and transport of supplies; member Governments, on their part, agreeing to put the services of such agencies at UNRRA's disposal.

Overshadowing this whole question of procurement, of course, hangs the fundamental problem of the production and availability of supplies required for relief. Of what use, it is constantly asked, are elaborate schemes of relief unless supplies are in sight? And with some understandable impatience those who represent the occupied countries are apt to say: "Better supplies without estimates than estimates without supplies." For countries such as New Zealand the question means just this: What can we do by vigorously increasing production, and more vigorously than so far, limiting consumption to the end that we will help to make available the foodstuffs that will be so urgently wanted to lessen death and disease?

DISTRIBUTION POLICIES

General policies governing the distribution of relief supplies, it was decided, should be based on the principles laid down for defining the scope of UNRRA's activities—namely, that countries, so far as possible, would be helped to help themselves. It was therefore agreed that, in general, the responsibility for distribution of relief and rehabilitation supplies in a given area should be undertaken by the Government or recognized national authority exercising administrative authority in that area. This decision to give recipient Governments, wherever feasible, full charge of distribution arrangements in their respective countries was based partly on a desire to restrict national sovereignty as little as possible, and partly in a desire to avoid the waste and confusion that would result in the organization by UNRRA of its own distribution machinery in areas where an effective administration was already functioning.

On the other hand, it was recognized and agreed that where this condition cannot be met—where, for example, normal distribution organizations have completely broken down, or where there is no one Government in control but a number of competing authorities, each struggling for power—it might be necessary for UNRRA itself to handle distribution. In such cases UNRRA is required to make the fullest possible use of local authorities and local organizations. Any Government, too, is at liberty to invite UNRRA to assist it in the distribution of supplies and the organization of relief services within its territory.

No definite provision was made for on-the-spot observation by UNRRA officials, but the Council recommended that the Director-General "should be kept fully informed concerning the distribution of relief and rehabilitation supplies within any recipient areas, and under all circumstances there should be the fullest working co-operation between the