

this movement having been accomplished under most difficult conditions and in the middle of winter. It was fitting, therefore, that at Atlantic City the well-publicized criticism to which the Administration had been subjected (not always without some justification) at previous Council meetings was conspicuously absent. Instead, many deserving tributes were paid by Council members, including the representative of New Zealand, to the Administration's efforts, and especially to the work of the Director-General, Governor H. Lehman, whose resignation, for reasons of health, was announced unexpectedly as the session convened. At least one definite conclusion may be said to have emerged from the general debate on the Director-General's report with which the session opened. Delegates were unanimously agreed that whatever UNRRA had done or failed to do, it had "given clear proof that where the will of the United Nations is clearly expressed, prompt and effective action can be taken."

Appreciation of this fact was a salutary reminder of the purposes for which the United Nations exists, at a time when these purposes were becoming somewhat obscured as a result of mounting international tension over the Iranian and similar "situations," which many anxiously feared might prematurely test the very precarious foundations upon which the system of world co-operation had been over-confidently erected. In such an atmosphere, and with an agenda containing questions which in the past had aroused heated discussion and apparently irreconcilable points of view, a minimum of conciliation and compromise might reasonably have been expected. Such, however, was not the case. On the contrary, the fact that, with few exceptions, these questions, including such politically contentious issues as the allocation of foodstuffs in tragically scarce supply, and the repatriation and care of displaced persons, were unanimously resolved is evidence of the very real desire that was shown by all concerned to find a common basis of agreement. Indeed, in several instances the measure of agreement reached represented a substantial advance past the point beyond which differences in principle and conflicting political interests had hitherto made a common approach impracticable.

Though the Conference was primarily preoccupied by the catastrophe with which the world is faced during the next eighteen months in the shape of famine and starvation for many millions and pitifully inadequate rations for many millions more, it was generally recognized that this problem and the general questions of peace and security were not unrelated. This relationship was, in fact, effectively stressed by the Director-General's statement at the outset of the session that "foundations of a secure peace cannot be built on famine."

The facts of the present food crisis are by now sufficiently well known; in essence, however, the situation is that the world is faced with a net deficit over the first six months of 1946 of 9,000,000 tons of bread grains (on the basis of the best available estimate of exportable surpluses as against minimum legitimate import requirements) and with a shortage of rice and fats of a corresponding magnitude. This means, quite simply, that countless millions of people in Central, Eastern, and Western Europe, in India, in Asia, and elsewhere must suffer extreme privation—many of them must literally die of hunger—even before next winter. The problem is a particularly serious one for countries depending on UNRRA supplies; nor, according to Governor Lehman, will it be one of merely temporary duration. "Even more important than the present crisis," he said, "is the ominous fact that all our present information indicates that the situation next winter (1946-47) is likely to be even worse."