

APPENDIX X

RELIEF

A. Canadian Statement, November 16, 1946

The Canadian delegation feels that since Canada is the third largest contributor to UNRRA both in its share of the costs and as an actual supplier of goods, the Committee should know the Canadian view on this important problem. Narrowed down the central problem is the method of meeting such relief needs as may exist in the year 1947. There appears to be complete acceptance of the existence of need and, while there are collateral questions of the extent of those needs and the determination of countries which may require relief, the central question is clearly: should the problem be met by the United Nations acting in concert or by some other arrangement between supplying and receiving countries?

To do this job UNRRA had to be a vast affair and it kept on becoming an ever more complex one as well. It had not only to procure but it had to arrange overseas shipments and internal transportation, and supervise distribution. Admiring its success as we do, we cannot help but shudder at its present complexity.

We have come to the end of the UNRRA stage in relief. Mr. LaGuardia himself has often said that he is looking forward to the speedy winding up of the huge UNRRA administrative organization. That is sensible and proper. The governments of the receiving countries and the countries themselves have all made very real steps towards recovery during the two years of UNRRA's life. Many of the governments are now very much on their feet, in fact occasionally on their neighbour's feet as well. They are able to enter into trade arrangements with other countries and, if they choose, direct their resources in order to affect very appreciably their foreign exchange position and hence affect their ability to purchase essential supplies.

We believe, however, that one of the purposes for which the international organization of UNRRA was established is still present: namely that there must be some international machinery for the screening of requirements and the balancing of competing claims.

Furthermore, in dealing with relief problems where time is of the essence, it is important that the agency which hears the claimants should be free to make its decisions and then ensure prompt action.

Canada regards as important the suggestion of a broad extension in the number of supplying countries. In the past two years, the great bulk of the load has been carried by a few countries but surely today we have reached the point where practically every Member of the United Nations should be able to make some contribution to the relief needs of 1947.