

After Recess

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. MacNICOL: Before asking one or two questions with reference to the bill, I wish to endorse what has been said by some other members, that it is to be hoped that the power to issue orders in council will not be used when parliament is in session.

Referring to the schedule. In article I, section 1, it is stated:

The administration shall have power to acquire, hold and convey property. . . .

Will the parliamentary assistant explain what circumstances are likely to occur wherein property would have to be bought, and if such property would be bought in Canada; or does the section refer only to property to be acquired in the occupied countries; what would be the nature of the property, and for what would it be used?

In the same article, section 2, paragraph (a), it is stated that the purposes and functions of the administration shall be—

To plan, coordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of any of the united nations through the provision of food, fuel, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities, medical and other essential services. . . .

First, would Malta be deemed an area eligible to receive assistance under this programme? If any part of the British empire outside the British isles themselves deserves assistance, I would think it would be Malta, which has given an example to the world of endurance of a blitzkrieg the like of which no other area outside London has suffered. I should like to know particularly as to the position of Malta in this connection. Last Saturday was Malta tag day in Toronto and I saw many people "chipping in" for Malta. I do not know whether in any other part of Canada a tag day is being held for Malta, but I hope the government will do something in a special way for this brave little island, which has given an example of heroism that has thoroughly entitled it to the George Cross, the first award of its kind, I believe, which has been made.

Also, would that portion of Egypt which suffered during the advance of the German army be eligible for assistance under the provisions of this bill?

In paragraph (b) of the same section reference is made to purchasing. What would likely be included in "purchasing"? This afternoon the hon. member for Lake Centre referred particularly, I believe, to food products, which come, of course, under paragraph (a). I am

not sure whether he mentioned anything about machinery; I believe that someone did. The streets of these devastated areas will have to be cleared out; roadways will be needed for the transportation of food and supplies, and trucks will be required for distribution; also a certain amount of road machinery and, perhaps, building machinery and related equipment will be needed. Would all that material as well as food be purchased by the committee set up under this bill, or is food the only thing to be purchased?

Paragraph (c) of section 2 also relates to what I have asked. The distribution of supplies will require trucks and perhaps other transportation equipment. Will transportation equipment be purchasable under the terms of this bill? If so, I assume that Canada through its representatives will get its fair share of orders; we could not expect any more, and perhaps should not expect any less.

I wonder whether, in surveying the whole job which will have to be done after the war, the council might say to Canada, "We will turn over to you the responsibility for Malta or the "blitzed" part of Egypt; France may be the responsibility of the United States, and Germany the responsibility of some other country." Is it possible that the work to be done will be divided in some such fashion among the different countries, so that each country will have an opportunity of doing a real job by itself, of course under the direction of the central committee?

Then, in article III, section 1, it is stated that "each member government will name one representative, and such alternates as may be necessary, upon the council"; that is, each of the member countries is to have one member of the council "and such alternates". Will each country name just one alternate; if more than one, upon what basis will alternates be named? Population, or ability to assist, or on what basis?

Section 2 of article III states:

The council shall be convened in regular session not less than twice a year by the central committee.

As I understand it, Canada will not have a representative on the central committee, since it consists of the four major members of the allied set-up, namely China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States. Apparently this means that the Canadian representative would be called only twice a year. How would he exercise his influence in the general work of the council if he is called upon only twice a year to attend?

Section 3 of article III gives the composition of the central committee, namely representatives of the four major nations and the