

3. While it is true that the additional amount of meat which may be made available for export by the restrictions on consumption suggested by the Food Requirements Committee will not of itself be a big factor in relieving distress in Europe, it would nevertheless be a serious matter if world public opinion looked on Canada as the only one of the active belligerents which had not seriously curtailed its civilian consumption of meat in order to come to the help of the distressed nations.

4. Repeated advice has been received from the Canadian Embassy in Washington of the criticism of Canada appearing in the United States because of the absence of meat rationing in this country. It is true that measures have been taken to increase the export of certain meat products to the United Kingdom with the effect of reducing our consumption here but the importance of these measures is not generally appreciated either in the United States or elsewhere and it is not possible for our representatives to do much to emphasize the effect of these measures as long as the plain fact remains that Canadians are free to buy as much meat as they can find in the stores while Americans are limited in their purchases by an irksome system of point rationing as well as by some shortages in distribution.

5. It is, therefore, inevitable that Canada will be criticized, in part fairly and in part unfairly, in the United States as long as serious shortages of meat exist in liberated countries while rationing prevails in the United States but does not prevail in Canada.

6. The figures of civilian per capita consumption, whether taken from the year 1944 or from the current year or cited by comparison with those for an average pre-war year indicate that both absolutely and relatively to pre-war, Canadians are consuming more meat per head than Americans. These figures will continue to be quoted as long as there is no rationing, but if rationing is instituted, publicity will turn to the quotas allowed under the respective rationing plans.

7. It follows that even if rationing were to be ineffective in reducing actual consumption, the mere fact of its institution would help to avoid a serious alienation of United States public opinion. There seems, however, to be little doubt that the type of rationing proposed by the Food Requirements Committee would result in a substantial reduction of meat consumption by civilians in Canada.

8. The discussions which have taken place concerning meat rationing, whether between officials of the Combined Food Board or in the public press of the various countries, have led to serious misunderstanding. The belief is widespread in the United States that the United Kingdom has amassed large stocks of food which ought to be consumed before any further sacrifice is imposed on American civilians. The United Kingdom representatives contend that United States officials have been supplied with complete information concerning the magnitude of these stocks, that in any case very substantial reductions in these stocks will take place during the calendar year 1945, and that some reserves are justified in the common interest either to meet the exigencies of war or to furnish emergency supplies to menaced populations on the continent of Europe.