

United Nations Agreement

It seems to me that the desire is more or less to limit the activities of this organization to urgently needed industrial and agricultural production; and various statements that have been made would seem to indicate that this now has become the main purpose of the united nations relief and rehabilitation organization.

Mr. MARTIN: The director himself said so.

Mr. COLDWELL: I think that is quite right. I am not sure, but I believe some slight amendment was made to the original proposal last autumn which also conveyed the same impression. In fact clause 11 of resolution 12, which was passed at the conference, says:

The task of rehabilitation must not be considered as the beginning of reconstruction—it is coterminous with relief. No new construction or reconstruction work is contemplated, but only rehabilitation as defined in the preamble of the agreement. Problems, such as unemployment, are important, but not determining factors. They are consequences and, at the same time, motives of action. The administration cannot be called upon to help restore continuous employment in the world.

So that this has a limited effect. But while criticizing the limited effect of the organization I do not wish for a moment to convey the impression that in any respect we are opposed to Canada's participating to the fullest extent in this great relief and rehabilitation project. My prime purpose in drawing this matter to the attention of the house is to urge that, so far as Canada is able, we endeavour to widen the scope. I believe that is what the hon. member for Acadia had in mind. I would urge that we endeavour to widen the scope of this measure, so that it may be applicable to a larger number of people and lay a framework for comprehensive international planning.

Unlike hon. members to my left, I am not so much alarmed by some of the rumours that are going around. I feel that an organization in which we have associated powers with such diverse economic ideas and economic aims as have the United States and the Soviet Union, affords a measure of protection to those of us who might otherwise feel that an attempt would be made to use this relief and rehabilitation organization as a club to impose upon the world any particular type of social, financial or economic system. I readily agree that such a danger might lurk within some such organization. But it seems to me that when we find associated within the organization, and participating in its activities, nations with such diverse economic and social views, adequate protection is ensured.

I should like to make one further statement about the widening of the powers of relief afforded under this measure. The settlement

[Mr. Coldwell.]

of peoples and the assistance given to peoples are largely confined to certain groups. For example, as I read the agreement, Chinese refugees will not participate to the same extent as will refugees from Europe. I believe we should see to it that so far as possible we treat all peoples alike, and bring all within the benefits of this measure.

Canada's contribution to UNRRA, amounting to one per cent of our national income, would, if our income were the same as that of last year, amount to about \$90,000,000. Is that about the correct amount?

Mr. CLAXTON: The amount is not known. It may be \$75,000,000.

Mr. COLDWELL: I am making my estimate from last year's figures.

Mr. CLAXTON: It is for the year ending June 30, 1943, and that makes the calculation rather difficult for us.

Mr. COLDWELL: For purposes of this discussion we will say the amount, mainly in goods, would be a maximum of \$90,000,000. During the war we have given to Great Britain, and latterly to the united nations, a gift of a billion dollars' worth of supplies a year. The amount may be less this year, but it will still be a substantial sum. I have always felt that we in Canada have an obligation to the peoples who have been under Hitler's heel and who have endured the scourge of war. That was brought to my attention as it was never brought before when the parliamentary party visited Great Britain two years ago. Only this morning we heard a lady say how tired of blackouts, and of the other conditions which caused them great misery and distress, the people of Britain were becoming.

We in Canada have been probably the most fortunately situated of all the peoples engaged in the war—perhaps, indeed, of all the peoples on earth. We have not within our own borders seen the scourge of war. We have had to make very few sacrifices of any kind. Our rationing has been such that we have had a plentiful supply even of the rationed commodities. And it seems to me that as a Christian and a democratic country we have an obligation to other peoples who have suffered because of the war. I know that at the moment, because of the difficulties connected with sending food to the suffering peoples of Europe, and the danger that such food would be used merely to assist Germany—indeed, might even prolong the war—no attempt is being made to feed many of the starving women and children in Europe. When the war is over we must endeavour to see to it that as a Christian country, in the exercise