

international organization which had no direct responsibility to the contributors. Canada's position was that we were prepared to assist, and that the assistance should be international in scope, because there was the criticism that the United States and Great Britain had used or intended to use relief as a political weapon. As I say, there was a very heated discussion. It went on for weeks and, so far as numbers were concerned, the majority were in favour of the international distribution; but the United States and Great Britain were adamant that they would not go into it on that basis. A day or two before the assembly closed it was apparent that it was going to close without any agreement whatever on this very important question. Mr. LaGuardia, who had been Director of UNRRA and was passing out of office, on a particular day made a most violent attack on his own government, suggesting that they had the intention of using food as a political weapon, and in the same connection he was none too complimentary to Great Britain. So you can understand that the situation was a very serious one. It was a tense moment when, on a certain Saturday morning, Mr. LaGuardia, who is a very emotional speaker, made a dramatic appeal for something to be done on behalf of the starving millions of the world, to reconcile the serious impasse; and then he said "Somebody must present a solution. I appeal to Canada to do it. I will accept any proposal that Canada makes, 'sight unseen'". I tell you, honourable senators, I have never been placed in a position where I was subject to the emotion which possessed me at that moment.

Sitting with my honourable friend beside me, I could see the eyes of the representatives of fifty-four nations concentrated on our name-plate; and I do not mind telling you that I was never prouder in my life. There was a pause. Then other speakers went on, and after about an hour and a half Canada made a proposal. It was a compromise suggesting that while the administration would be on the basis which Great Britain and the United States were insisting upon, an international body of experts should determine the food needs of the countries. This body had no official status, it did not actually distribute the money or the food, but it would recommend where the need was, and relieve to that extent at least the political aspect. The chairman adjourned the meeting over the week-end, and on Monday morning the committee was called together again. Immediately the representatives of the United States, of Great Britain and of the Soviet Union, and Mr. LaGuardia,

announced that they agreed to Canada's solution. The only reservation was that they did not think it was as good a plan as theirs.

Now honourable senators, I want to say that this seemed to me at the time something of dramatic significance. You know how your mind travels on occasions of this kind. After all, I reflected, ours is a country of 12,000,000 people, and, as the leader of the opposition said, we are dealing with the representatives of hundreds of millions of people,—340,000,000 in India, 400,000,000 in China, 200,000,000 in the Soviet Union. How comes it that Canada, with its 12,000,000 population, exercises this influence? It cannot be a matter of numbers.

Well, what does it come to? I suppose you cannot be dogmatic and ascribe it to any particular thing, but I can mention some circumstances which I think are factors. I remember sitting and thinking the next day about it. To begin with, I believe the first factor is the great effort that our boys and girls made in the last war. Of 12,000,000 people, 1,000,000 were in the armed forces of this country. Then there was also not only the matter of what they did, but of what the people at home did in the way of providing the materials for them, and an equal amount for our allies. Particularly, I think, our influence arose from the fact that we, unlike any other country in the world except the United States, financed our effort without one dollar of assistance from any other country. I think that impressed the nations.

Also, I believe there are other things. I remember one day when, on coming back from a meeting where there had been a bitter discussion about South Africa, the leader of the Opposition said to me, "My, Robertson, how happy I am that I live in Canada". And when I heard of these bitter religious disputes in India and the race and colour disputes in South Africa, I recalled that one of the reasons for the position we occupy is that we are not a country of one particular people. Had this been a country exclusively Anglo-Saxon in its racial origin, we would not have been up against any difficulties. We would not have been up against difficulties if everyone in this country was of the French racial origin. We would not be up against any particular difficulties if all were of one religion. The age-long problems of this world have arisen because there are differences arising between majorities and minorities. I believe from the bottom of my heart that one of the factors which has made Canada outstanding is that we have made an outstanding success in respect to these age-long problems of religious and racial differences, and that these problems in other parts of the world are ten times as serious as