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WHAT IS FOOD CONTROL?

ERNEST B. ROBERTS (Food Control Board of Canada).

What is food control, this new knowledge forced on Man by war? It is the most appalling undertaking the collective world has had. It is the fight against World Famine.

Food Control is no more "fixing" prices for the masses than it is spoon-feeding for the individual. Price-fixing is a small, often only an insignificant, part of its ramifications. Food Control in its last terms is food production, food possession, food distribution and food allotment by the State. That is what it has come to in all but name in France, in England and in Italy. It came, perhaps less democratically, in Germany and Austria-Hungary many months ago. In its international aspect, Food Control now means, or will shortly mean, the finding of food for between 400,000,000 and 500,000,000 people three times a day for seven days a week as long as the war lasts, and as long afterwards as may be requisite to restore, all over the world, the disturbed means of distribution—a period put at anywhere between one and three harvests.

Control is Not Wand-Waving.

With the cobwebs off our eyes so that we understand that Food Control is not wand-waving about "fixing" prices, something else comes into sight. It is that Food Control is everywhere an utterly new knowledge for man. Like aerial flight and under-sea navigation, it was known theoretically before the war. Each of these new practical sciences may be continued for peace purposes when the last echo of belligerency has died. "And the greatest of these" is Food Control. It may be, indeed, one of the inexplicable compensations for so much suffering to-day that Food Control, started chiefly through the vile driving purpose of war, may, in the future, help to right those dire inequalities of poverty and destitution by teaching a better a fairer, a wiser distribution of foodstuffs.

Mr. Herbert Hoover, the United States Food Administrator, recently said that the "war has entered a phase in which food dominated the economics, strategy and statesmanship, not only of the countries at war, but of neutrals as well." There is something odd and unexplained to us in Canada, living on the fulness of things by the profits of war orders from the Mother Country, to be told that four neutral nations are on bread rations. Holland, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden have less intrinsically to do with the war than Canada has. Their existence is not directly at stake. Why should they have hardships and deprivation? Switzerland is reported to be on shorter rations than even any of the warring countries, to be almost as short of food as overrun, broken Belgium. Our duty, next to that of the Allies, is to share our food with such innocent neutrals. It is in the "spirit of the game," this comradeship among peoples, although it is but a minor side of the new democratic science of Food Control. This international sharing of food means a new brotherhood of

In the Hun Programme.

German Food Control is a part of ruthless strategy. Germany had included this science among her forty years of calculated study for her war of conquest. Her own in-

ternal supplies of food were commandeered at the crack of war. Before the German hordes had over-run Belgium and Northern France, the very ration for the conquered people had been, so to speak, weighed out and apportioned by the Commissariat. True, for a few weeks, the plan worked harshly: it was untried in practice, yet members of the Belgian Relief Committee, of which Mr. Hoover was the head, learned more of Food Control under the ruthless Hun administrators than they could have been taught in a cycle at home. Since then Germany has stretched out this system to include another 65,000,000 people allied to her cause in Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey; and thus has she increased their resistance for war a hundredfold. Germany will leave nothing undone this summer, one may be sure, to utilise the Russian wheat fields.

Prof. Kellogg, of the Belgian Relief Committee, who has specialised on the rations of war prisons in Germany, says in *The Atlantic Monthly*:—"Germany is fighting as a whole people, a whole nation mobilized. That she has not already been beaten is due no less to her food organization than to her fighting organization. She has put patriotism and food together. So must we."