

Mr. HANSELL: I mean, I am getting tired of this sort of thing.

An hon. MEMBER: That is what he means.

Mr. HANSELL: I am not getting tired of myself.

Mr. MacNICOL: We are all getting tired of order-in-council government.

Mr. HANSELL: The other day the Minister of Munitions and Supply brought down a very important matter. Now I have not got access to the caucus records of the Liberal party, but I will make a pretty good guess that neither the international airways agreement nor the agreement at present before us was ever brought before the Liberal party as a whole. I will offer that as a good guess. I think I am right in my guess. Here are a few men sitting in Canada heading a government. They asked for the responsibility. The people have given it to them, given it to them as their servants; yet they go and do things in this way without first calling upon parliament for the advice of the people. That is my protest. Although I make that protest, I repeat I believe this is a good bill. It manifests the right spirit toward the unfortunate. I believe we should pass this bill, but let me add that I think, too, that we have reason to solve our internal problems as well.

Mr. REID: I have two questions to ask—

Mr. HANSELL: The parliamentary assistant has not answered my question. *Hansard* would read a little better if the answers were given now.

Mr. CLAXTON: I do not know that at this time I can go into a discussion with the hon. member for Macleod on the wisdom or lack of wisdom of changing our long-established constitutional practice with regard to the execution of international agreements, a practice which we have taken with our inheritance of British parliamentary institutions from the United Kingdom, a practice which has worked well there and which I think has so far worked well here. However, I doubt if the reservation in an international agreement that it shall be subject to approval by a legislature is necessarily an effective test of a working democracy. There are other tests, and I think our democracy in Canada is able to stand comparison with that in any one of the countries which have that provision in their constitutions.

With regard to the first suggestion that the contributions of UNRRA would cover only one-fifth of the cost of relief, may I say I hope that the contributions of UNRRA will cover the whole cost of relief; but they will

not cover the whole cost of feeding Europe or the far east. A great deal of the food and supplies necessary to feed Europe will be supplied in Europe by Europeans working their own land. Under the agreement and resolutions passed in pursuance of the agreement part of the total cost of relief will be borne by the countries which are able to bear that cost themselves. At Atlantic City the French committee of national liberation indicated that France was such a country; that she would be prepared to pay for the cost of the relief furnished to her. In all probability the Netherlands, Belgium and perhaps Norway may be in the same position of being able to pay. Under the resolution the countries which are able to pay are to pay in so far as it does not interfere adversely with their international exchange position. The hope is that the cost of relief as relief will be borne by the contributions made by the nations.

With regard to the selection of the four nations of the central committee, I can only say that the agreement was delivered at Atlantic City after it had been signed by the forty-four nations the day before in the form in which it is. There must have been negotiations at the diplomatic level, which resulted in those four nations being selected. In connection with this agreement the argument can be advanced that there is a special reason why the supreme powers should have a special position, namely, that the administration of relief will take place as countries are liberated by the armed forces of the united nations, and those armed forces will principally be the forces of the four greatest powers. That liberation will be followed by allied military occupation and by the administration of relief by the allied military governments. During that whole period those powers will wish to have an effective say in affairs. But I point out that the central committee has power to make decisions relative to policy only between meetings of the council, and those decisions must be communicated to the members of the council, and are subject to review by the council. Therefore there is an effective check in that respect.

While I am on my feet may I reply to a question asked by the hon. member for Parry Sound. He asked what the position was regarding voluntary agencies such as the international Red Cross. The agreement provides in article IV, section 2:

Foreign voluntary relief agencies may not engage in activity in any area receiving relief from the administration without the consent and unless subject to the regulation of the director general.