

The Council was assured by the Director-General that, subject to the responsibility imposed on the Administration under Council resolutions in respect to assistance given such ex-enemy territories as Italy, Austria, Hungary, &c., this principle was being fully observed by UNRRA.

A further matter directly affecting UNRRA and its programming of supplies for countries sorely in need of food, which the Council debated at some length, concerned the requisitioning of land and other resources by occupying Forces in liberated countries receiving UNRRA assistance. Consideration of this question was added to the Council's agenda in the course of the Atlantic City session on the initiative of the United States member, who informed the Council that his Government had fully confirmed press reports that in Austria the occupying Russian Army had acquired, and was continuing to acquire, very large areas of arable land. He said, also, that the Soviet military authorities had declared their opposition to an UNRRA proposal that oil and gasoline necessary for the relief programme should be provided without cost to UNRRA from the indigenous production now under Soviet military control. Inclusion of this question on the Council's agenda was strongly, though unsuccessfully, opposed by the Soviet delegation, who, in common with representatives of Yugoslavia, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, thereupon expressed their inability to take any part in the discussion that ensued. Their attitude was based on the contention that this matter was outside the scope of UNRRA's authority, that it was under consideration by the Allied Control Commission, and that UNRRA would harm its reputation as a relief organization by taking sides in an essentially political issue. The United States, however, with the support of the United Kingdom and the majority of Council members, insisted that the consequences of such requisitioning were of the gravest concern to UNRRA as a relief agency and that the Council, as such, was concerned only with the principle involved and not with proving or disproving the facts as they may exist in any specific country.

In the course of the discussion the Administration expressed doubts as to the practicability of giving effect to the principle that where such requisitioning takes place, supplies should be adjusted in such a way as to avoid penalizing other countries or regions receiving relief, in as much as UNRRA, in liberated areas, can work only through the Governments and military authorities concerned. The majority of the Council, however, were clearly reluctant to allow the prospect of administrative difficulties to baulk adoption of the statement of general principle as contained in the following resolution submitted by the United States representative and accepted by the Council:—

“WHEREAS, Section 2 (a) of Article 1 of the UNRRA Agreement sets forth as a primary purpose of UNRRA that in areas in which it operates it shall provide food, fuel, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities, medical and other essential services and shall facilitate in such areas so far as necessary to the adequate provision of relief, the production and transportation of these articles and the furnishing of these services, and

“WHEREAS, the use or requisitioning by foreign military forces of local relief supplies or land or other resources for their production in such areas will tend to defeat the purpose of UNRRA as stated above, and

“WHEREAS, such use or requisitioning by decreasing local relief supplies will put an additional burden on the resources of UNRRA in its efforts to provide adequate relief