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## UNRRA, CORSO—and YOU The Human Needs Behind The Initials

*THIS radio interview about UNRRA and its New Zealand auxiliary—the organisation known as CORSO—was given recently from 2YA and 1YA by Colin Morrison and Howard Wadman. It will be heard in the near future from other National stations.*

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**H.W.:** They tell me, Mr. Morrison, that you are secretary of this new show called CORSO. What does C-O-R-S-O stand for?

**C.M.:** The New Zealand Council of Organisations for Relief Service Overseas.

**H.W.:** Well, you've certainly made a prettier word of it than UNRRA. That always sounds very ugly, I think. Let me see. UNRRA is the United Nations Relief and—what?

**C.M.:** United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

**H.W.:** There's something to be said for these invented words if they save us a mouthful like that. As I understand it, UNRRA was set up by all the United Nations to plan for the relief of the liberated peoples, so as to be ready to rush in with food and so on, as soon as the enemy is driven out?

**C.M.:** Yes. Forty-four nations make up the Council of UNRRA. If you can stand a bit more official wordage, the Charter of UNRRA declares: "That immediately upon the liberation of any area by the armed forces of the United Nations, or as a consequence of the retreat of the enemy, the population shall receive aid and relief from their sufferings; food, clothing and shelter; aid in the prevention of pestilence and in the recovery of the health of the people, and that preparation and arrangements shall be made for the return of prisoners and exiles to their homes, and for assistance in the resumption of urgently needed agricultural and industrial production, and the restoration of essential services."

**H.W.:** Food, clothing and shelter. Return of prisoners and exiles, resumption of production and essential services. It's a tall order.

### As Complicated as War

**C.M.:** You're right. It's a job as complicated as fighting a war, and it's going to need as much planning beforehand and as much devotion and sacrifice in carrying it out.

**H.W.:** How is UNRRA going to work?

**C.M.:** Well, UNRRA has a director, Herbert H. Lehman, a highly respected American, who was three times Governor of New York. He has a staff of some 2000 experts, chosen from among all the nations collaborating. They are now at work on many different tasks. Some are in Greece distributing food, clothing and medical supplies. Hundreds are in the Middle East waiting for the way to open in Europe, and relief workers are now in France and Belgium. But the actual distribution of supplies is almost the least of UNRRA's jobs.

**H.W.:** How's that?

**C.M.:** Well, the more immediately important task is to estimate what things are going to be needed, where, in what quantities, and in what order of priority.

Then those things must be purchased, collated, and transported to the area of need.

### No Political Discrimination

**H.W.:** UNRRA will have power of life and death over many thousands of people. I'm going to ask a rather difficult question. They say that after the last war the enormous power of the Relief Administrator was used against left-wing governments. You know the kind of thing "Elect a government satisfactory to us and you get the food. Support the Reds — and well, it may not arrive." I don't say this happened, but it is said. Do you think that will occur this time?

**C.M.:** UNRRA have specifically resolved that this shall not happen. Neither the fact that a country has foreign funds available, nor the fact of its having a government of which we approve, is to influence the provision of relief, which is to go where it is most needed without any other consideration. The actual resolution reads that food "shall at no time be used as a political weapon, and that there shall be no discrimination made because of race, creed or political belief."

### No Prolonged Spoon-Feeding

**H.W.:** That's good. You notice we are inclined to concentrate on the provision of food as the vital function of UNRRA. But I take it that this is only one item in the programme.

**C.M.:** Absolutely. That's only the emergency measure. The big job is to get the essential activities of any liberated area going again — medical and sanitation services, water, lighting, power, transport, communication. Then the people can get their own production going. The great thing is to help the people to help themselves. Nobody wants to be spoon-fed for a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. Director General Herbert Lehman has said "The measure of our success is the speed with which we become unnecessary."

**H.W.:** Yes, but what a job that's going to be. Where is the manpower to come from to get the country in working order?

**C.M.:** As far as possible the manpower is being recruited from the liberated area itself. But UNRRA will have to supply a skeleton staff of key workers. They will be highly qualified experts.

### New Zealand's Part

**H.W.:** I know some New Zealanders who would like a chance to go. Do you think they'll be wanted?

**C.M.:** I think a few will be wanted from New Zealand. But they will have to be men and women of extraordinary fitness, and highly trained in medicine, nursing or welfare work, engineering, or sanitation or transport. Those who would like their names considered can write to CORSO for the necessary form.

**H.W.:** Yes, that brings us back to CORSO. What exactly is that?

**C.M.:** CORSO is an organisation of 21 New Zealand voluntary societies who are interested in various aspects of overseas relief. It is a council on which they are all represented, whose object is to co-ordinate their work, and in addition, to recruit personnel as needed by UNRRA, and to inform the public so

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